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THE

MARINERS OF ENGLAND

and their  
Deeds of  
Daring





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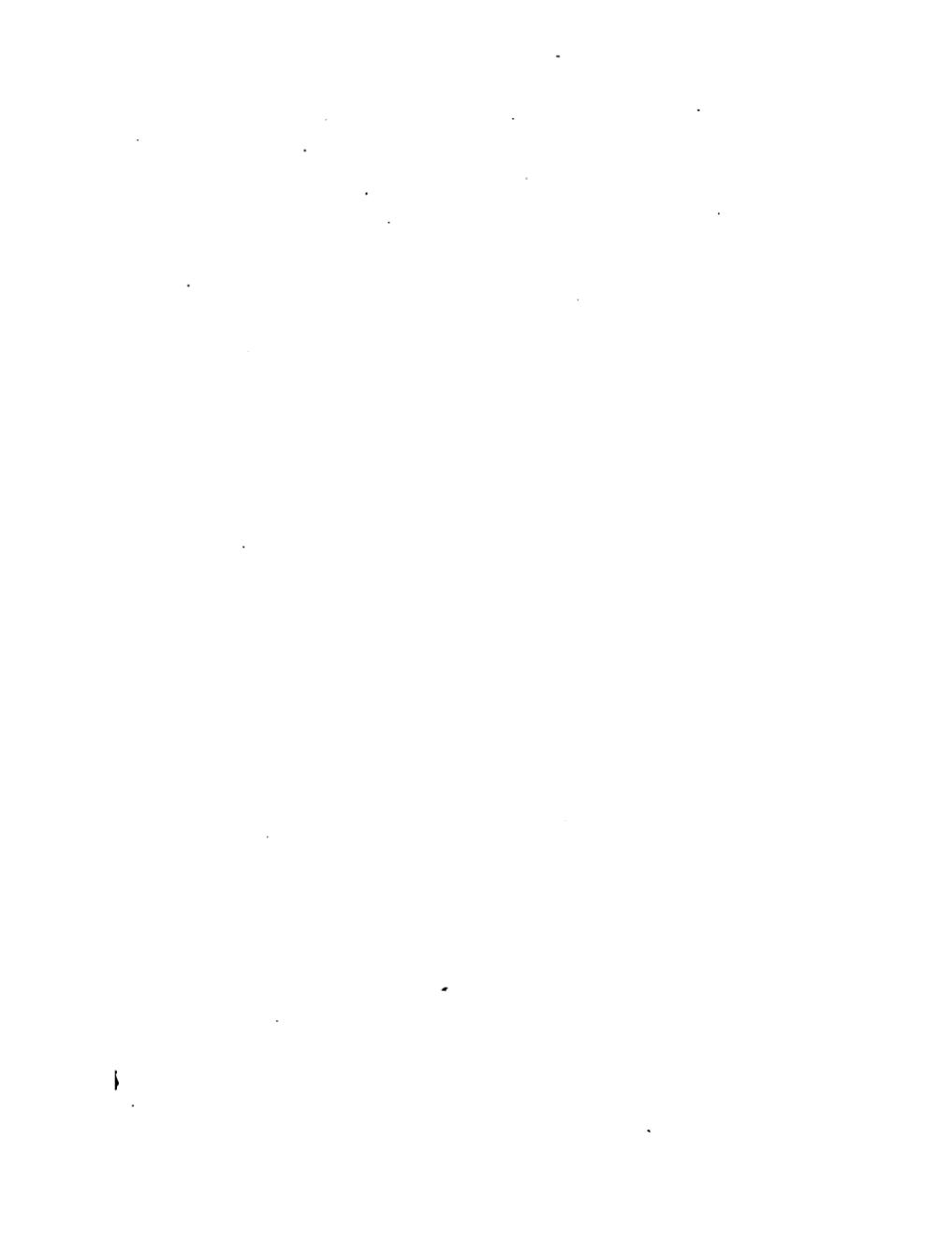


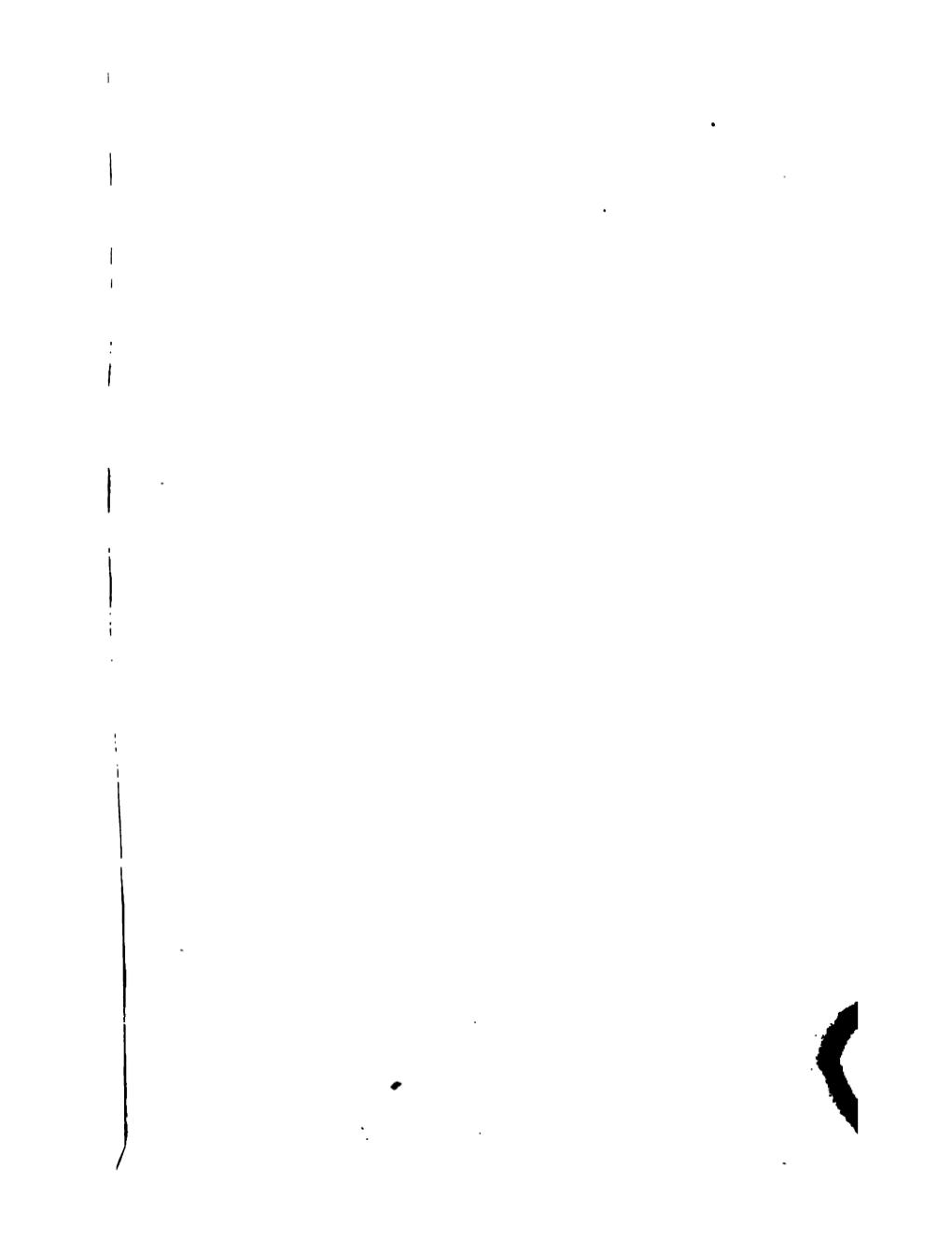
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# THE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

AND

*THEIR DEEDS OF DARING.*







OLD ENGLAND'S "WOODEN WALLS."

Frontis

THE  
**MARINERS OF ENGLAND**

*STORIES OF DEEDS OF DARING*

Written for English Youth.

BY

W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS,  
AUTHOR OF "GREAT NAMES IN EUROPEAN HISTORY," ETC. ETC.

"From her wooden walls,—lit by sure hands,—  
With thunders, and with lightnings, and with smoke,—  
Peal after peal, the British battle broke." — *Tennyson*.



EDINBURGH:  
THE EDINBURGH PUBLISHING COMPANY.  
LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.

1879.

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The spirits of your fathers  
Shall start from every wave,  
For the deck it was their field of fame,  
And ocean was their grave.  
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fought,  
Your manly hearts shall glow,  
As ye sweep through the deep  
When the stormy tempests blow.

*Thomas Campbell.*

## Preface.

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### I.

THE Mariners of England ! a gallant race are they,  
Whom the breath of battle kindles till they're foremost in  
the fray :  
The odds they never reckon when before them stands a foe,  
For they feel a fierce delight  
In the fury of the fight—  
Are happiest when the storms of war about them rudely blow.

### II.

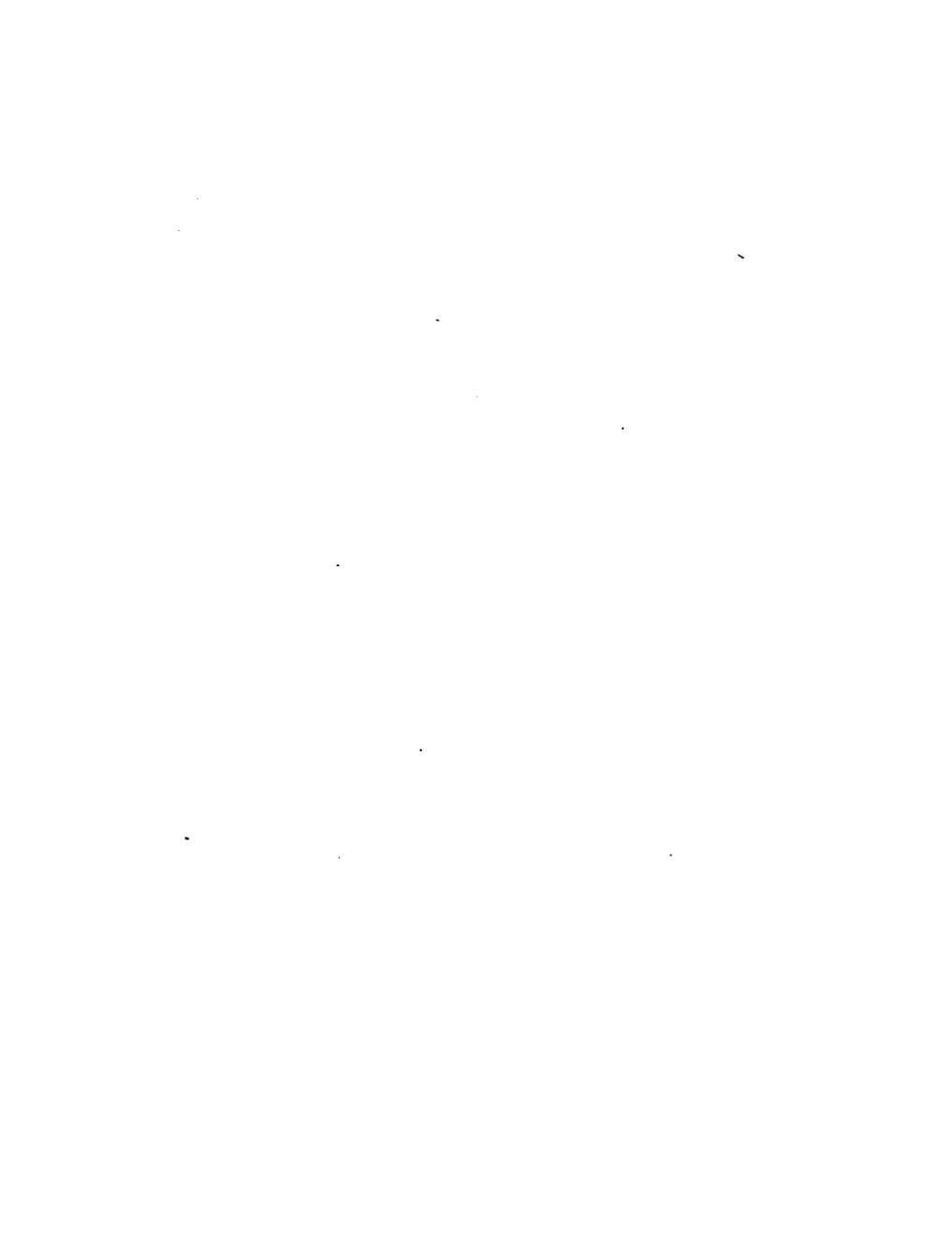
The Mariners of England ! a hardy race are they,  
Who far into the frozen straits have forced their vent'rous way ;  
Who face with spirit as unmoved the shrieking tropic gales,  
As when o'er summer seas,  
Before a southern breeze,  
With all her swelling canvas spread the stately vessel sails !

### III.

The Mariners of England ! a famous race are they ;  
Whose deeds of daring men shall sing in many a stirring lay :  
Who can forget the glory won by Nelson and by Blake,  
By Rodney, Benbow, Rooke,—  
And the hostile ships they took,  
And all they did and suffered for their king and country's sake ?







THE  
MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

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I.

*THE BATTLE OF SLUYS.*

A.D. 1340.



EDWARD THE THIRD had laid claim to the crown of France in right of his mother, Isabella of Anjou. By the old Salic law of France his mother could not inherit; and his contention, that though a female was unable to succeed, she could transmit the right of succession, was declared by the French jurists to be indefensible. He proposed, however, to support his claim by the sword; and in 1340 assembled a large army with the view of invading France. He was on the point of departure, when Archbishop Stratford received information that the French king, anticipating Edward's attempt, had collected a formidable fleet, manned by Normans and Genoese, between Sluys and Blankenburg, to oppose his landing. It consisted of one hundred and ninety large ships, with about the same number of

smaller craft, and, to awaken the enthusiasm of its mariners, had received the consecration of the Papal benediction. Edward's fiery temper was roused by the intelligence, and he issued an immediate order, that every available vessel in the eastern and southern ports should be impressed, manned with soldiers, and duly equipped to take part in the expedition. The archbishop, finding that his cautious counsels were disregarded by the king, resigned his office of chancellor. Sir Robert Morley, a seaman of repute, also warned the king of the peril he was about to incur. With the hasty anger of the Plantagenets, he replied, "I shall go ; those who fear where no fear is, may stay at home."

The English fleet, composed of two hundred ships of all descriptions, but chiefly of small burden, set sail from Orwell, in the forenoon of June 22d, 1340. The next evening, dropping anchor off Blankenburg, they could descry in the harbour of Sluys, which was separated from them by a low tongue of land, a forest of masts. Said the king to the captain of his ship, "What may those vessels be?" "So please your Grace," was the answer, "they be the armament of the Normans, which King Philip keeps at sea ; and much damage have they done your Grace. For the fleet it was that burnt your good town of Southampton, and took the great ship Christopher."

"I have long desired to meet with them," replied King Edward. "Now, please God and St George, we will fight them. Of a verity they have done me so much mischief, that I will be revenged on them if it be possible."

Three knights were sent on shore to reconnoitre. They returned with intelligence to the effect that the

French king's armada consisted of two hundred ships of war, besides smaller vessels, and nineteen so large that they had never seen any to equal them, and with them "the good ship Christopher," of which mention has already been made.

Nothing daunted, Edward prepared for battle. He drew up all his vessels in close array, with the strongest as an advanced division, and those carrying his bowmen on the wings. Between every two vessels with archers was one with men-at-arms. Some ships, also full of archers, were held as a reserve, when an opportunity or necessity arose. During the night the enemy left their moorings, and at daybreak they were seen in four lines lying across the mouth of the estuary on which the port of Sluys is situated. The ships were chained together, and carried turrets or towers on their top masts, filled with stones and other missiles, for hurling upon the decks of the English.

King Edward now transferred "fifty noble ladies of honour," who were going abroad to wait on his queen, the brave Philippa of Hainault, to the swiftest sailors of his fleet, with a strong guard, so that whatever happened they might be in safety. Then he and his marshals hoisted their sails, to have the wind on their quarter, for the sun shining full on their faces might prove a disadvantage to them. With the breeze in their rear they bore down in irresistible force on the astonished enemy, who had interpreted the king's manœuvre as a movement of retreat, and exclaimed exultantly, that "the English took good care to turn about, for they were afraid of meeting them." When they were forced to own that the English had no such apprehension, they gallantly pre-

pared for fight, and the Great Christopher went forward in the van, with a ringing fanfare of trumpets and other martial instruments.

The English were silent until within range, when they hurled such a storm of arrows on the advancing enemy that the Genoese bowmen were driven from their decks. With a loud and hearty "hurrah," King Edward's warriors continued the fight, directing their arrows with so much strength and skill, that the decks of the French were soon strewn with dead and wounded. The Great Christopher was early recaptured; and a body of archers being put on board, she was converted into an engine of attack against her recent possessors. Desperate grew the conflict; the air seemed dark with falling bolts; and so great a confusion prevailed among the French, that as ship crashed against ship, the English men-at-arms joyously leapt on board their antagonists, and, sword and axe in hand, carried all before them.

The first and second lines were soon broken; and Sir Robert Morley arriving on the scene with a fleet collected from the northern ports of England, the third line was seized with a sudden panic. The men knowing that their ships were inextricably linked together, and could not severally escape, leaped in their terror into the sea, with the intention, it may be supposed, of swimming ashore. In this way, it is said, upwards of two thousand perished. The fourth line was still intact, and offered a gallant resistance until nightfall, when the few ships able to sail slipped away in the darkness. These, however, were detected by the keen eyes of the English seamen, and so hotly pursued, that only a few stragglers eventually escaped. It is said that in this

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murderous engagement the French lost between 20,000 and 30,000 men. On board the Jacques of Dieppe, which, after a desperate resistance, surrendered to the Earl of Huntingdon, four hundred dead were counted. One of the French admirals was taken prisoner, another killed.

The French navy was swept away by this terrible blow. So complete was the disaster that his courtiers dared not communicate it to Philip ; and at length it was decided that the fatal news should be conveyed by his favourite jester. The task was a dangerous one, but the jester discharged it ingeniously. "Oh, those craven English!" he exclaimed in the king's hearing ; "oh, those weak-hearted English!" "Eh, then," inquired Philip, unsuspectingly, "why are they so craven? In what have they shown a want of courage?" "Cowards they are and must be," was the reply ; "because they had not the valour to jump overboard, as our brave French and Normans have done!" The king was silent ; he understood his jester's meaning.

Three days after the victory of Sluys, Edward landed his army, and laid siege to Tournay ; but the rest of his campaign was as inglorious as the opening of it had been brilliantly auspicious.



## II.

*L'ESPAGNOLS SUR MER.*

A.D. 1350.



F the many titles which Edward the Third won or claimed, none were better deserved than that of "King of the Sea." He won it in the sea-fight off Sluys; he confirmed his right to it by the defeat he inflicted on the Spaniards.

Spain, as an ally of France, having become involved in the war against England, a Spanish fleet, under Don Charles de la Cerdá, was despatched to harry and ravage the English shores. "There was much ill-will at this time," says quaint old Froissart, "between the King of England and the Spaniards, on account of outrages and plunder committed at sea by the latter. So it happened that the Spaniards, who had been disposing of their merchandize in Flanders, were informed that they could not return home without meeting the English fleet. To this intelligence they paid little attention. However, after they had sold their wares, they amply furnished their ships from Sluys with arms and artillery, and all such archers, cross-bowmen, and soldiers as were willing to receive pay. Of these preparations King

Edward was not unobservant, and he said publicly :— ‘ For a long time we have spared these people ; whereupon they have done us much harm. And instead of amending their conduct, they grow more arrogant ; for which reasons they must be chastised as they pass our shores.’ ” His council approved of his proposal ; and the king, after issuing the usual summons to the lords and knights who owed him service, began to collect his ships in the Channel. On the 10th of August, 1350, he addressed a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, ordering that prayers should be offered up for the success of his arms, and explaining his reasons for defending himself against the Spaniards. He said that, in violation of the treaties between the two kingdoms, the Spaniards had plundered and attacked English merchantmen ; and so great was their pride, had even assembled in great numbers in Flanders, to destroy the Flemish army, and invade England. Shortly afterwards he departed for the sea-shore, attended by his two sons, the Prince of Wales (afterwards famous as “ The Black Prince”), and John of Gaunt (Shakespeare’s “ time-honoured Lancaster ”), and a splendid retinue of English nobles, the Earls of Arundel, Northampton, Hereford, Suffolk, Warwick ; the Lords Percy, Mowbray, Neville, Ross, and Reginald Cobham, and 400 knights.

The Spanish fleet assembled in Sluys was of formidable strength. “ There were forty large vessels, of such a size, and so beautiful, that it was a fine sight to see them under sail. Near the top of their masts were small castles, full of flints and stones, with a soldier to guard them ; and there also was the flagstaff, whence fluttered their streamers in the wind, so that it was plea-

sant to look at them." These large ships were well equipped ; they carried fully 2000 men, of whom a large proportion were veteran soldiers.

The number of the English ships is nowhere related ; but it is certain they were of much smaller size than the Spanish. Edward embarked at Sandwich, August 21st, in his favourite vessel, the "Cog Thomas ;" and having given orders as to the plan of fighting to be adopted when the two fleets engaged, he immediately set sail. We are told that he seated himself in the bow of his ship, so eager was he to be present in the expected fray. He was dressed in a black velvet jacket, with a small beaver hat of the same colour, "which became him well." Being in a particularly joyous mood, he ordered his minstrels to play to him, on the harp, a German dance, which Master John Chandos, one of his attendants, had recently introduced from Germany. He made the same knight sing with his minstrels, which delighted him exceedingly. From time to time he looked up to the castle on his mast, where he had stationed a watch to inform him when the Spaniards were in sight. While he was thus amusing himself with his knights, who rejoiced to see him so gay, the look-out man suddenly said, "Sir, I spy a ship, and it appears to me to be a Spaniard." Bidding the minstrels cease, he asked if there were more than one. "Yes ; I see two, three, four. God help me !" exclaimed the watch, as he saw the tall masts of a large fleet rising against the horizon, "so many do I see that I cannot count them." Then the king knew that he had fallen in with the enemy whom he desired to meet. He ordered the trumpets to sound, and got his ships under weigh in line of battle.

It was now about the hour of vespers. Edward ordered wine to be brought, and he and his knights filled their cups and drank. Then each fixed his helmet on his head. The Spaniards had the advantage of the wind, and could easily have refused to give battle ; but they felt sure of an easy victory, and longed to pounce on their prey. "Lay me alongside the Spaniard who is bearing down on us," cried the king ; "for I will have a tilt with him." The master obeyed, and laid his ship ready for the Spaniard, who came on full sail with a fair wind behind him. Had not the "Cog Thomas" been sound and stiff, she must have gone to the bottom with the shock ; for the Spanish ship was of great size, and she struck with all her force—with so much force, indeed, that the castle in her top crashed against the English top ; the masts gave way, and all the soldiers and archers in the castle perished. Edward's vessel did not escape entirely unhurt, for she sprung a leak, but the knights stopped it, and concealed it from his knowledge. "Grapple my ship with yonder galley," said the king, "for I will have possession of her." But the knight replied : "Let her go her way, and you shall have better than her." So when another great Spaniard came up, the English knight fastened the royal ship to her with grappling irons, and the fight began—a fight which could be fitly described only in Homeric strain ! The archers and cross-bowmen on either side displayed much gallantry, but the brunt of the battle fell on the knights and nobles. The *melée* was now general. Whenever a ship found itself equal or superior to an enemy, it grappled and fell to. "The English," says Froissart, "had not any advantage ; and the Spanish vessels were much larger

and higher than their opponents, which gave them a great superiority in shooting and casting stones and iron bars on board their enemies, annoying them exceedingly. The knights of the king's ship were in danger of sinking, for she leaked considerably. This made them the more strenuous to conquer the vessel to which they were grappled. Many gallant deeds were done. At last they gained the ship, and throwing over board all the Spaniards, abandoned their crew, continuing the combat in the Spanish vessel."

The naval power of England was as yet a thing to be dreamt of; and it would seem, from Froissart's account, that the Spaniards excelled the English in seamanship. But the latter fought with a courage that would not be denied. The young Prince of Wales, and those under his command, were separately engaged. His ship was grappled to a large Spaniard, with which he for some time maintained a doubtful contest; and suffered so much from the Spanish missiles, as to be in danger of sinking. At this conjuncture, the Earl of Derby came up and attacked the Spaniard on the other side, while the air rang with shouts of "Derby to the rescue!" The Spaniard reeled beneath the onset; the English knights boarded her, and flung her crew into the sea, "not a single soul being taken to mercy." The capture was accomplished only just in time, for the Prince's ship foundered as he and his men sprang on board their prize.

A curious accident befell Sir Robert de Namur's ship, the "Salle du Roi." She was grappled to a great Spaniard, which literally sailed away with her. But "a varlet" called Hannekin leaped on board the Spanish

galley, and, running to the mast, cut away the halyards of the mainsail, so that it fell to the deck. He then cut four of the shrouds which stayed the mast, and checked the vessel's onward career. In the confusion caused by this daring act, the English contrived to board the Spaniard, and after a brief struggle to take possession. As usual, all on board were slain and flung into the sea.\*

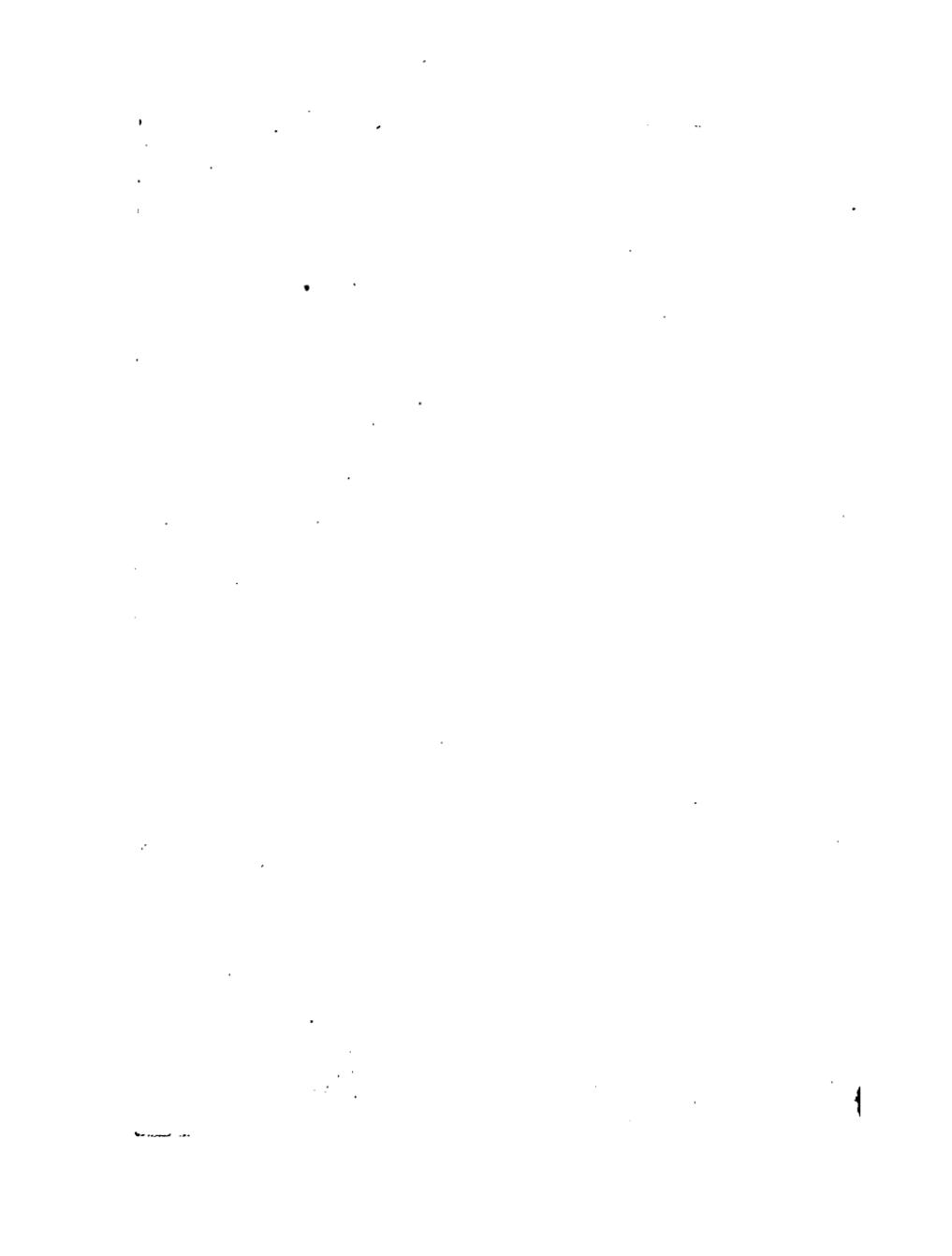
The battle raged for several hours, but resulted in a complete victory for the English king. The Spaniards lost, according to one account, fourteen ; according to

\* Here is Froissart's account of this achievement (as translated by Johnes) :—“ The engagement was in other parts well contested by the English knights, who exerted themselves, and made their own of it, for they found those who feared them not. Late in the evening, the *Salle du Roi*, commanded by Lord Robert de Namur, was grappled by a large Spaniard, and the fight was very severe. The Spaniards were determined to gain this ship ; and the more effectually to succeed in carrying her off, they set all their sails, took advantage of the wind, and in spite of what Lord Robert and his men could do, towed her out of the battle ; for the Spaniard was of a more considerable size than the Lord Robert's ship, and therefore the more easily conquered. As they were thus towed, they passed near the king's ship, to whom they cried out, ‘ Rescue the *Salle du Roi*,’ but were not heard, for it was dark ; or if they were heard, they were not rescued. The Spaniards would have carried away with ease their prize, if it had not been for a gallant act of one Hannequin, a servant to the Lord Robert, who, with his drawn sword on his wrist, leaped on board the enemy, and cut the large cable which held the mainsail, by which it became unmanageable ; and with great agility, he cut other four principal ropes, so that the sails fell on the deck, and the course of the ship was stopped. Lord Robert seeing this, advanced with his men, and, boarding the Spaniard sword in hand, attacked the crew so vigorously, that all were slain and thrown overboard, and the vessel won.”

another, twenty-six ships. The remainder of the fleet took to flight. Then Edward ordered his trumpets to sound a recall; and having gathered together his scattered vessels, sailed for England. Soon after nightfall, he dropped anchor at Winchelsea; and disembarking with his sons and some of his nobles, took horses in the town, and rode to the palace, about two leagues distant, to rejoin the queen.

Such was the battle of "L'Espagnols sur Mer," which Sir Harris Nicolas not unjustly characterizes as "unrivalled in English history." Not only, he says, "were the chief nobility and knights of England present, but they were led by their Sovereign and Prince of Wales in person, who both so completely shared the danger of the day, that they fought until their ships actually sunk under them. Persons of every rank emulated the heroic courage of their princes, and the intrepid conduct of Hannekin will lose nothing by comparison with any modern exploit. It was, moreover, a victory over a new enemy, for the pride of Spain was then for the first time humbled by an English fleet; and the noble title of 'King of the Sea' was the appropriate reward bestowed by the people on their king for his naval triumph."







### III.

#### *THE SPANISH ARMADA.*

A.D. 1588.



ANY a gallant deed was done, I trow, when England's fleet met the great ships of the "invincible" Armada, in the days when Elizabeth was queen.

Philip of Spain was bent on winning the crown of England, and restoring the ancient supremacy of the Church of Rome. England was not less resolved to strike a blow at the preponderant Spanish power, and to open up new channels of commercial enterprise in the Western World. A contest between the two countries had for some time been inevitable; and though long delayed by the cautious policy of Queen Elizabeth, and the hesitation of Philip, who waited for a sure opportunity, the storm broke in the summer of 1588. At Dunkirk lay an army of 30,000 Spanish veterans, under the command of the Duke of Parma, the ablest general of the age; while a fleet of flat-bottomed transports was in readiness to carry them across the Channel. To protect their passage against the attacks of the English navy, Philip assembled in the Tagus his finest war-ships, which, under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia,

set sail for Dunkirk in the spring of the year. Almost immediately on their departure a gale arose, which drove them back to Ferrol. After refitting, they again put out to sea, in order to effect a junction with the Prince of Parma's forces. One hundred and twenty-nine ships in all, of which sixty-five were large galleons, "built high like castles," and four were gigantic galleasses, each carrying fifty guns, besides four large galleys, fifty-six armed merchant-vessels, the best that Spain produced, and twenty caravels or pinnaces: they were proudly named "The invincible Armada." The aggregate of cannon, brass and iron, was 2430. Eight thousand sailors were on board this mighty fleet, which also carried 29,000 soldiers, 1000 gentlemen volunteers, and 1600 men of various ranks and occupations.

It was the end of July when the sails of the Armada were sighted from the Lizard. Immediately the English beacons flashed the news of its coming all along the coast. England was eager to grapple with her enemy. An army, under the command of the Earl of Leicester, was encamped by Tilbury Fort. The militia of the midland counties were hastening towards London; while the levies of the south and east were held ready to forbid a descent on either shore. In the Channel lay the English fleet, inferior in strength to the Spanish, but prepared to do its duty. It numbered only eighty vessels, and these were sadly disproportionate in size to the galleons and galleasses, only four of them being equal to the largest, while fifty were of no greater tonnage than our modern yachts. But they were in excellent trim; swift to sail, easy to handle, and manned by 9000 splendid seamen, such as the world had never seen

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before. Their admiral was Lord Howard of Effingham, an experienced officer, self-possessed, and of the serene courage which shines brightest in the darkest danger. Under him were Francis Drake, who had sailed round the world and fought the Spaniards in every sea ; Martin Frobisher, who had adventured into the depths of the icy ocean ; and John Hawkins, who had borne the cross of St George triumphantly into the Spanish main.

On the night of the 29th, the queen's ships and a few of the volunteers got out of Plymouth Sound, and moored securely behind the cliffs of Ram Head. By Saturday morning, when the Spaniards came in view of the Cornish coast, forty Englishmen were ready for action under the headland. But the look-out men, though they strained their gaze to the utmost, discovered no sail upon the horizon for many an hour. It was late in the afternoon when a bank of clouds seemed to rise in the western horizon, which soon dissolved into a semi-circular line of stately vessels, the centre making its appearance first, and then the two wings gradually extending along the blue rim of waters. In the picturesque language of the old chronicler, ocean seemed to groan beneath their burden ! Slow and stately was their advance, for the wind was little more than a breath ; and as they drew near enough to be separately seen, it became evident that rumour had not magnified their bulk. Not only their size, but their number astonished the watchers ; one hundred and fifty, large and small, was the formidable total reported to Lord Howard ; the excess above the original strength of the Armada being made up by a few traders bound for Flemish ports, which had taken advantage of the protection it afforded.

As soon as the full extent of the danger was described, the English were on the alert to meet it. On board every ship carrying the Red Cross of St George, the greatest activity prevailed. The anchors were weighed, and canvas spread out to the wind ; but it was not the admiral's design to bring on an engagement, and he still kept within shelter of the shore. It was a cloudy evening ; but when the Spanish commander, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, arrived off Plymouth, he could see that if he attempted to enter the Sound he would meet with a hot reception. Unable to ascertain the exact strength of the English fleet, and considerably overrating it, he signalled to his galleons to lie-to for the night, and prepare for action at daybreak.

The next morning was bright and glorious, such as our English summer in the south so often brings us. A warm haze rose from the land, but a gentle westerly breeze prevented the heat from being oppressive. The Spanish ships crowded on their heavy sail to catch every air that blew ; and slowly and steadily, like "moving castles," bore down upon the English. In vain ! The nimble islanders darted hither and thither, like ocean-birds, and drew near or shot away from the "high-towered, broad-browed" galleons and galleasses at their pleasure. It was a repetition of the tactics by which Themistocles had foiled the Persians in the days of Greece's extremity. To the on-looker the spectacle was curious and suggestive. A herd of elephants might as well have attempted to close with a pack of swift-footed greyhounds. Lord Howard's ship, the *Ark*, audaciously swept along the entire rear of the Spanish array, pouring her fire jauntily into each galleon as she passed.

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knocking spars and rigging about the heads of the puzzled “Dons,” and then wearing round and easily retracing the same course. The annoyance of the Spaniards was excessive. But however keen their irritation they could not refuse to admire. They felt, perhaps, that they had met with the men who would wrest from them the empire of the seas; men, their superiors in seamanship and “pluck.” They saw the ships of their enemy manœuvre with an ease that to them savoured of the magical; the English guns fired with a rapidity that surpassed their conception. A bull might as well try to overtake and pin with its horns the terrier leaping audaciously at its heels or its flank, as one of those heavy galleons to run alongside any of the English vessels that so dexterously hovered about it. Don Alonzo da Levy, in the high-towered Rata, attempted to cross the bows of the Ark. Lord Howard hauled to the wind as if to meet him, but passed by with a laugh, fired into the San Matteo, which lay on the waters like a log, and gaily careered on his way.

All through the afternoon continued the battle, if battle it could be called when neither side came to close quarters. The Spaniards fought bravely wherever they got the chance, and bore with courage the pitiless fire of their antagonists. But they soon saw their inability to cope with such men as Drake and Frobisher. Their shot flew over the English ships, while the latter battered them considerably. So Medina Sidonia signalled to his fleet to make sail up channel, ordering Martinez de Recalde, with the squadron of Biscay, which contained the best ships and the best seamen, to protect his rear.

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Howard followed close upon the Spaniards' heels. The sun went down angrily, the wind rose, and a heavy sea came up from the west. To the trim English ships this was as nothing, but the great galleons rolled uneasily, and, huddling together lest any of them should be cut off, fell into sad disorder. The Capitana ran foul of the Santa Catalina, and broke her bowsprit. Immediately afterwards the foremast fell, and, embarrassed by the wreck, the ship dropped behind. Her captain, Don Pedro de Valdez, fired a distress gun, and the admiral sent two of the galleasses to his assistance. These would have taken him in tow; but, owing to the strong sea, the cable broke. Then the admiral despatched boats to bring off Don Pedro and the crew, but the former would not abandon his vessel. A London privateer kept watch and ward over her until midnight, firing now and then a shot, and sometimes hearing voices; through the wind and the sea being very great, what they said could not be distinguished. In the morning she was overtaken by Drake, and straightway hauled down her flag. Drake carried her into Torbay, and there left her in charge of the Brixham fishermen, while he himself made haste to join Lord Howard, taking with him Don Pedro and his officers. He had picked up a valuable prize. The galleon had several casks of good Spanish money in her hull, as well as some tons of gunpowder. The latter was put on board a swift Brixham fishing-boat, and sent out to the fleet, which was not too well supplied with ammunition.

The loss of the Capitana was not the only disaster which befell the Armada on its first day in English waters. On board one of the larger galleons, a flagship,

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the officers came to words about the inglorious issue of their initial action with the enemy. In the course of the dispute, the captain struck the master-gunner, a German, with his stick. The latter, enraged at the insult, hurried below, flung a blazing brand upon an open powder-barrel, and leaped into the sea. The explosion shattered the deck from stem to stern. Two hundred seamen and soldiers were hurled aloft ; some dropped into the water and perished ; others fell back upon the wreck, scorched or mutilated, dead or dying. But the stout ship was so strongly built that she still continued to float, with her tall masts unshaken. The admiral sent boats to save the men and the officers ; and the few who had escaped unhurt were taken off. But to move the wounded was found impossible, and they were left on the wreck till morning, when the English rescued them and sent them ashore. Our seamen were repaid for their humanity by the booty they discovered ; casks of money and gunpowder, as on board the Capitana. So it happened that Lord Howard supplied his most serious deficiency (as Froude remarks) from the enemy's own resources, and made them provide him with the means for inflicting upon them destruction.

Next morning, the 1st of August, the sky was cloudless, and a luminous mist rested on the eastern horizon, whence a light breeze rippled over the dark-blue waters. The Armada by this time was off the white cliffs of Portland. A league or so to the west lay the English ; but both fleets were almost motionless, or drifted slowly with the tide. What little wind there was gave the Spaniards the advantage ; though they showed no disposition to bring on an engagement. The admiral was content to rest his crews, while

he despatched a letter to the Prince of Parma, relating his mishaps, and urgently imploring that pilots might be sent to him, as he knew nothing of these foreign waters.

Thus passed the 1st of August. On the 2d, the wind blew steadily from the east, and the Spanish admiral bore down upon the English to offer them battle. Howard calmly put out to sea. A report ran through the Armada that the English were flying, and the galleons began to give chase. The San Marcos, the best sailer, forged ahead; and about noon, when the breeze got round to the south, found herself at some distance from the rest of the fleet, with the English admiral having the advantage of the wind. In pursuance of his plan of avoiding a general engagement, in which the superiority of the enemy must necessarily have told, and of attacking such single ships as might be detached from the main body,—of plucking “the feathers of the Spaniard one by one,” as the English seamen phrased it,—a descent was immediately made upon the San Marcos. It is only justice to say that she was gallantly defended, and in an hour and a-half received 500 shots while returning no more than 80. At last another galleon came up to her assistance; and Howard, having expended his stock of powder, was compelled to retire.

By this time the news of the arrival of the Armada had spread all over England, and from every quarter volunteers hastened to the scene of action. Catholics as well as Protestants sallied forth to the defence of their common country. “Cliffords, and Veres, and Percies took their places beside the Raleighs and Cecils of the new era; and from Lyme, and Weymouth, and Poole, and the Isle of Wight, young lords and gentlemen came

streaming out in every smack or sloop that they could lay hold of, to snatch their share of danger and glory at Howard's side. The strength which they were able to add was little or nothing ; but they brought enthusiasm ; they brought to the half-starved and neglected crews the sense that the heart of England was with them, and transformed every common seaman into a hero. On the Tuesday evening after the fight, Medina Sidonia counted a hundred sail behind him, and observed, with some uneasiness, that the numbers were continually increasing."

The fervour of patriotism which the coming of the Spaniards kindled in Old England's heart, and the activity of preparation which everywhere prevailed, are described with much spirit in a fragment by the late Lord Macaulay :-

From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,  
That time of slumber was as bright, as busy as the day.  
For swift to east, and swift to west, the warning radiance spread ;  
High on St Michael's Mount it shone—it shone on Beachy Head.  
Far o'er the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,  
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of  
fire.  
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves,  
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves :  
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald  
flew ;  
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge—the rangers of Beaulieu.  
Right sharp and quick the bells rang out all night from Bristol  
town ;  
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton Down.  
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,  
And saw, o'erhanging Richmond Hill, that streak of blood-red  
light.  
The bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like silence broke,  
And with one start and with one cry the royal city woke ;

At once, on all her stately gates, arose the answering fires ;  
At once the wild alarm clashed from all her reeling spires ;  
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear,  
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer ;  
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying  
feet,  
And the broad streams of flags and pikes dashed down each  
rousing street ;  
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,  
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in ;  
And eastward straight, for wild Blackheath, the warlike errand  
went ;  
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent ;  
Southward, for Surrey's pleasant hills, flew those bright coursers  
forth ;  
High on black Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the  
north ;  
And on, and on, without a pause, untired, they bounded still ;  
All night from tower to tower they sprang, all night from hill to  
hill :  
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Derwent's rocky dales ;  
Till, like volcanoes, flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales ;  
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height ;  
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light ;  
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,  
And town and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain ;  
Till Belvoir's lordly towers the sign to Lincoln sent,  
And Lincoln sped the message on, o'er the wide vale of Trent ;  
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burnt on Gaunt's embattled pile,  
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

The 3d of August was a day of inaction ; and the English lay about two leagues to westward of the Armada, waiting for supplies of ammunition. Medina Sidonia, concluding that they feared an encounter, ordered the galleons to attack ; but they were beaten off without much damage. During the night powder and shot

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for a day's fighting arrived, and on Thursday, the 4th, the Spanish admiral was roughly convinced that he had underrated English courage. Sir George Carey, who came up in his pinnace, found himself, at five in the morning, "in the midst of round shot, flying as thick as musket-balls in a skirmish on land." For Howard, observing the loose array of the Armada, had ventured on a general attack, which was led by himself, in the Ark, with Lord Thomas Howard in the Lion, Lord Sheffield in the Bear, Sir R. Southwell in the Elizabeth Jonas, and Captain Barker in the Victory. Exchanging close broadsides with every galleon he passed, Howard made for the Spanish admiral, who had taken his place in the centre of the Armada. Don Oquendo observing his intention, gallantly threw himself between the duke and his antagonist, who run into his galleon with such force that two soldiers in the forecastle were killed by the shock. The Ark's rudder, however, was unshipped, so that her pilot lost control over her ; and dropping to leeward, she was quickly surrounded by a swarm of galleons, eager to overwhelm her. Howard immediately ordered out his boats. She was taken in tow ; and as her head went round her sails filled ; and just as the Spaniards prepared to rejoice over their prize, she glided away between them with such rapidity that "though the swiftest ships in the whole Armada pursued her, they seemed in comparison to be still at anchor."

For some hours the fight continued, the English losing not a man, and having scarcely any wounded ; the Spaniards suffering considerably in killed and wounded, and in damage done to their masts, yards, and rigging. No captures were made on either side, yet the result was

all in favour of England's sons. For while their hearts were full of hopefulness, and of a sanguine belief in their ultimate success, the Spaniards were sorely discouraged. They had expected an easy victory; and, behold, their enemy laughed them to scorn! They could not come up with those nimble English ships that seemed to skim the waters like "things of life." They could not escape that storm of shot which rattled about their ears, and knocked their huge castled poops into splinters, while their own guns, slowly as they aimed and fired, seemed never to hit the mark.

On the 5th (Friday), fine weather continued; but as Howard was forced to make sail for Dover to obtain a supply of powder from the castle, the Spaniards were left at liberty to steer towards the coast of France. In the evening, Howard and his ships resumed their position in their rear. The next day was stormy; and Medina Sidonia, who knew nothing of the navigation of the Channel or of the Thames, and whose pilots were as ignorant as himself, determined to bring up in Calais Roads. "The wind was to the west of south, and as long as it held in that quarter the roadstead was tolerably secure. Coming up with a rising tide, he let fall his anchor suddenly, hoping that his pursuers would be unprepared, and would be swept past him; but his movements had been observed by eyes which were skilful to interpret them. The English anchors fell simultaneously with his own two miles astern, and the two fleets lay watching each other, almost within canvas-shot of the shore."

But a crisis had now come. If Medina Sidonia's juncture with Parma were to be prevented, there was

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no time to be lost. The Spaniards had been discouraged but not defeated. The Armada was still as formidable as ever; not a galleon had been captured. Howard took counsel with his chief captains; what was to be done? The conclusion at which all arrived was, that a general engagement must be hazarded; and that for this purpose the Spaniards must be enticed or driven out of the secure position in which they were anchored. It was resolved to send into the mass some fireships; and eight of the less useful vessels attached to the fleet were accordingly fitted up with all kinds of inflammable materials, while their rigging was well coated with pitch. At midnight they dropped down with the tide, and as they neared the Armada, burst into sudden flame. The Spaniards, who had already had terrible experience of these destructive engines of warfare at the siege of Antwerp, lost all presence of mind. The floating pyramids of fire, with their blazing masts and yards and shrouds, struck a panic into the bravest heart. No one was more appalled than the admiral, who, devoid of resource to meet an unforeseen emergency, could only signal to his ships to cut and slip their cables, and put out to sea. This was exactly what the English had desired; and they were as well pleased as the Spaniards when the latter got out into the open, and lay-to six miles from the shore.

The English, meanwhile, weighed at their leisure, and stood after the enemy. Drake, with some fifty ships, clung to their skirts; Howard, with the rest, kept away towards Calais, and attempted to drive ashore or in upon the fireships some of the Spanish vessels which had not yet got clear. Drake saw, however, that time

spent in hunting up these stragglers was time wasted ; that the main object was to prevent the return of the bulk of the Armada to their former anchorage, and, if possible, to force them through the Straits. There was every sign of a coming storm ; and Drake opined that if it overtook the Spaniards in the (to them) unknown waters of the North Sea, it would go hard with their heavy and ill-handled galleons.

So, next morning, finding them in a long line off Gravelines, Drake, with the aid of Lord Henry Seymour, made up his mind to attack and beat them. He began the fight about eight o'clock, and hammered away at them all through the long summer day. It was no long-shot range, but fighting at close quarters. The Spaniards would fain have escaped from the incessant hurricane of balls and bullets ; but the English ships were so lightly managed that they baffled all their movements, attacked them first on one side, then on the other, and drove them back upon their centre, which, at the same time, helpless and disordered, was slowly forced towards the dangerous sandbanks and shallows of the Flanders coast.

The English ceased firing at dusk ; not because they were weary, but because they had expended almost their last cartridge. They had every reason to be satisfied with the day's work. Three galleons had sunk ; three had gone ashore ; many rolled on the waters, mastless and with riddled hulls, like storm-beaten hulks ; and four thousand men had fallen. The condition of the Armada, indeed, was far worse than the English captains could conceive of. Scarce a ship but had suffered pitifully. The guns were dismounted and knocked to pieces ; the

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sails were rent into fragments ; and so many shot had struck the sides of the galleons, as they heeled over, and exposed their timbers below the water-line, that some were with difficulty kept from sinking. “ We are lost, Señor Oquendo,” said Medina Sidonia to his ablest lieutenant ; “ what are we to do ? ” “ Let others talk of being lost,” said the stout sea-captain ; “ your Excellency has only to order up fresh cartridge.” But nobody else had Oquendo’s doughty spirit ; and a council of war being hastily summoned, it was resolved to return to Spain by the only way open, that is, by the Orkneys and Ireland. “ Never anything pleased me better,” wrote Drake, “ than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards. I have a good eye to the Prince of Parma, for, with the grace of God, if we like, I doubt not ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St Mary Port among his orange trees.”

Despatching Lord Henry Seymour with thirty ships to guard the Straits, and keep a watch upon Dunkirk, Drake and Lord Howard, with five days’ provisions and a scanty supply of ammunition, entered upon a close pursuit of the flying enemy. They still expected that the Spaniards would revive their courage, and try again the hazard of battle ; but as the wind raged and the sea swelled, signs of their miserable condition increased in number, and the English captains began to understand that their work was done. They passed the drowned and drowning bodies of mules and horses which had been thrown overboard for want of fresh water to feed them. “ More than one poor crippled ship dropped behind as her spars snapped, or the water made its way through the wounded seams in the straining sides. The Spaniards, ‘ stricken,’ ”

it was now plain, 'with a wonderful fear,' made no attempt to succour their consorts, but passed on leaving them to founder." So having only three days' provisions left, and feeling satisfied that all fear of danger from the Spaniards might now be cast aside, Howard signalled for his ships to put about, and run for the Thames.

What English skill and valour had so well begun was effectually completed by the hand of Nature. The storms of the wild North Sea broke upon the Spaniards, who were weakened by sickness and want of food, and perished by scores in the most terrible misery. After passing the Orkneys, they found themselves exposed to yet more furious tempests, and the dangers of unknown currents and a lee-shore. So great was the destruction wrought among them, that no more than fifty ships regained the shelter of a Spanish port. Thirty had been sunk or taken in the English Channel. The remainder, about seventy in number, had gone down at sea, or were wrecked among the Orkneys and the Faroes, and on the the Irish coast. It is computed that eight thousand Spaniards were drowned, or murdered by Irish wreckers, between the Giant's Causeway and the Blaskets.

"Such was the fate," says Froude, "of the brilliant chivalry of Spain, the choicest representatives of the most illustrious families in Europe. They had rushed into the service with an emotion pure and generous as ever sent Templar to the Sepulchre of Christ. They believed that they were the soldiers of the Almighty. Pope and bishops had commended them to the charge of the angels and the saints. The spell of the names of the Apostles [the largest Spanish ships were thus christened] had been shattered by English cannon. The elements,

which were deemed God's peculiar province—as if to disenchant Christendom, were disenchantment possible, of so fond an illusion—whirled them upon a shore which the waves of a hundred million years had made the most dangerous in the world; there, as they crawled half drowned through the surf, to fall into the jaws of the Irish wolves.”\*

The part which the elements played in the destruction of the Armada and the deliverance of England, was gratefully recognised by Queen Elizabeth, who ordered a medal to be struck, with a representation on the obverse of a fleet storm-stricken, and on the reverse the following legend: “He blew with His winds and they were scattered.”

\* Sir Walter Raleigh's account of the fight with the Armada (“England's Salamis,” as Kingsley calls it) is quaintly laconic:—“The Spanish fleet, consisting of one hundred and forty sail, were by thirty of her Majesty's ships of war, and a few of our own merchants, and by the wise, valiant, and advantageous conduct of Lord Charles Howard, High Admiral of England, beaten and shuffled together, from the Lizard in Cornwall, first to Portland (where they shamefully left Don Pedro de Valdes with his mighty ships), next to Calais, where they were driven with squibs from their anchors, and chased out of the sight of England round Scotland and Ireland.”



## IV.

### *THE STORY OF "THE REVENGE."*

A.D. 1591.



NE of the bravest, and, at the same time, one of the roughest of the Elizabethan sea-captains was Sir Richard Greenville, who came of the famous Greenvilles or Grenvilles of Devon. A strong-featured, dark-complexioned man, with eyes that shot stern quick glances beneath overhanging brows. He ruled his men with a hand of iron, and confronted his enemies with "a soul of adamant." \* He shared to the full in that intense hatred of the Spaniards which was cherished by most of the English seamen of his time, and in that proud conviction of English superiority which enabled them to meet the Spaniards at such unequal odds.

In the English fleet, under Lord Thomas Howard, which lay off the Azores on the last day of August, 1591, Sir Richard Greenville bore his flag as vice-admiral on board the Revenge. The admiral was on board the Defiance; and the rest of the squadron consisted of the

\* It is said of him that, in his moods of merriment, he would chew and swallow wine-glasses, by way of dessert, until the blood flowed from his lacerated mouth.

Bonaventure, Captain Crosse ; the Lion, Captain George Fenner ; the Foresight, Captain Sir Thomas Vavasour ; and the Crane, Captain Duffield. There was also the Raleigh, a small bark, commanded by Captain Thin. Six London "victuallers," or provision ships, and two or three pinnaces, were attached to the squadron ; which, after being six months at sea, had put into Flores, one of the Azores, to obtain much-needed supplies of wood and water.

Some of the ship's crews were on shore for this purpose, when an English trader arrived with the tidings that close at hand was a formidable Spanish fleet, numbering fifty-three vessels of the largest size. In those days, the brave days of old, English seamen were not accustomed "to count odds ;" but fifty-three against six was a disproportion which appalled even the stout heart of a Howard. And this the more, because his crews were terribly weakened by sickness. On board the Revenge ninety men were disabled, and the Bonaventure was so short-handed that she could scarcely be manœuvred.

To encounter the Spaniards under such circumstances would have been madness. There was but one course to be adopted, and that was immediate retreat. The men on shore were hurriedly recalled. Sir George Carey's bark was sunk, and her crew of twenty men transferred to the Bonaventure. Then, with all possible speed, the English ships slipped their cables—no time could be spared to weigh anchor—and stood out to sea.

Except the Revenge, which lingered to the last, waiting for her men, many of whom, having wandered far in land, had not yet obeyed the signal of recall. At length, she too quitted the harbour, though several stragglers

having been left on shore, her crew was reduced to about a hundred fighting men. Lord Thomas Howard and his captains, by their greater alacrity, had succeeded in getting the advantage of the wind, and their ships being faster sailers than the Spanish galleons, had got out of danger. But the Revenge was not so successful. Sir Richard was urged, therefore, by the master "to cut his mainsail, and cast about, and trust to the sailing of the ship," for from the movements of the enemy it was clear that he stood in imminent peril of being surrounded. Sir Richard, however, as Raleigh says, "utterly refused to turn from the enemies, alleging that he would rather choose to die than to dishonour himself, his country, and her Majesty's ship; persuading his company that he would pass through the two squadrons in despite of them, and enforce those of Seville to give him way, which he performed upon divers of the foremost, who, as mariners term it, sprang their luff, and fell under the lee of the Revenge. But the other course," says Raleigh, wisely, "had been the better, and might well have been answered in so great an impossibility of prevailing."

Steering straight into the heart of the Spanish fleet, he fell upon the foremost ships with such fury that they yielded to his onset, luffed, and fell under his lee. So long as he held his wind, he was able, by skilful seamanship, to elude any direct attack from his huge opponents. But, about three o'clock in the afternoon, a great ship of three tiers of ordnance, the San Felipe, which was to windward, bore down upon him, and took the wind out of his sails, so that he lay helpless. While he was in this position, the admiral of Biscay's ship, another huge galleon, luffed up on the other side, and attacked him;

to be followed by four others, two on the larboard and two on the starboard ; so that the Revenge, single-handed, was fighting six of the largest war-ships in the world.

At this crisis we hear of one of the London victuallers, the "George North of London," appearing on the scene ; though one may well ask what business had she "*dans cette galère.*" She had already received several shots, but her master desired Sir Richard's orders, and to know if he could assist him. Sir Richard wisely recommended the gallant merchant-mariner to save himself and his ship, which could be of no service in such a contest as that which he had undertaken.

All night long the fight continued. The San Felipe was so battered by the cross-bar shot of the Revenge that she fell off, and, it is said, soon afterwards went down with all on board. Two other Spanish galleons were sent to the bottom ; but as fast as one was driven off another took her place.

"Fifteen several Armadas," to use Raleigh's phrase, "were brilliantly repulsed by this one English ship, which received, in the course of the unequal action, eight hundred shot of great artillery, besides many assaults and entries." An hour before midnight, Sir Richard was hit in the side. He refused, however, to go below ; and while the surgeon was dressing the wound, he received another in his head, and the surgeon was killed beside him. When morning reddened in the east, the Spaniards drew off, having suffered greatly ; and a pause in the hopeless fight took place. But as day increased, the men of the Revenge decreased. Scarcely one had escaped without a wound. The deck ran with blood. The dead lay thick by the guns which they had handled so well. "As the

light grew more and more, by so much more," says Raleigh, "grew our discomfort. For none appeared in sight but enemies, save one little ship called the Pilgrim, commanded by Jacob Whidden, who hovered all night to see the success; but in the morning, bearing up with the Revenge, was hunted like a hare amongst many ravenous hounds, but escaped."

By daybreak all the powder was spent. In repulsing the enemy's various attempts to board, the pikes had been broken; forty of the fighting men were slain; and of the rest, few were without grievous hurt. To fight or manœuvre the dismasted, shattered, leaking, shot-torn wreck was equally impossible; the end had come. What? to haul down the Red Cross? There were six feet of water in the hold; the bulwarks were swept away; nothing was left overhead either for flight or defence; the end had come. What? to surrender to the Spaniard? Sir Richard, who was mortally wounded, called the master-gunner to him—he was a man of his own unyielding stamp—and bade him scuttle the Revenge where she lay, that England might proudly see how, after so many hours of desperate fighting, and with so great an armament, the Spaniards had been unable to take a single English ship. "Yield yourselves to the mercy of God," he said to the seamen who gathered round him, "rather than to that of men, and sully not the glory of your nation in order to prolong your life for a few miserable hours or days."

The master-gunner was fain to do Sir Richard's will; but the others, who were not, like Sir Richard, mortally wounded, and thought that they had done enough for their own honour and for England's glory, disputed his orders. They reminded him that many brave men on board yet

living might do their Queen and country acceptable service hereafter. And when they found the master-gunner resolved to kill himself, or sink the vessel, they took away his sword, and locked him in his cabin. The master of the Revenge then went on board the Spanish flag-ship, and offered to surrender on condition that their lives were spared, and that they were sent back to England, the common seamen free, and the officers on payment of reasonable ransom. The Spanish admiral, Don Alfonzo Bazan, was full of generous admiration of the desperate though useless heroism of his opponents : he readily acceded to these terms, and sent his boats to bring off the wounded, and take possession of the Revenge. In a courteous message to Sir Richard, he entreated him to leave the shattered ship, and repair on board his own vessel, where his wounds could be properly dressed. Knowing that he was dying, the old Sea-King replied, that the Spanish admiral might do with his body as he would, he esteemed it not ; and accordingly the Spaniards proceeded to remove him with the most sympathetic care. He fainted as he was lowered into the boat ; but, on reviving, requested the few faithful friends who stood around him, grieving, to pray for him.

On board the Spanish admiral he was treated with the most generous courtesy ; but on the third day he died of his wounds, almost with his last breath pouring out his curse upon the traitors and dogs who had not stayed to fight the Queen's enemies, as he had done. He, at least, he said, had done his duty, and looked for everlasting fame.

In this strange battle the Spaniards, it is computed, lost nearly a thousand men, besides two ships which were

sunk, and two which were run ashore to save their crews.

It has frequently been asked, Whether Sir Richard's example was one to be followed? Whether it was, indeed, his duty to sacrifice himself and his crew in a hopeless contest? Well, the answer to the first question settles the second. The heroism of resolution which Greenville displayed is the quality which has won our naval supremacy; which won Blake's victories, and Cape St Vincent, and the Nile, and Trafalgar. Taken by itself, the fight which has handed down Sir Richard's name to posterity was a failure. He and his vessel were captured after all. But then, what does not England owe to it? Who can calculate to what an extent it has fired the hearts of our seamen? Or how far it has helped to raise the standard of duty which our naval service has ever recognised? Admiral Byng was a brave man, but he lost his honour and saved his fleet. Greenville lost his ship, and saved his honour. Whose example would you rather put before the youth of England? Even from a commercial point of view, Greenville's desperate daring has paid better than Byng's cautious courage. It has done much towards securing our shores from invasion, towards the extension of our empire, towards the glory of our flag; while half a dozen prudences like that of Byng's would have wrecked our naval supremacy, and, as a necessary consequence, endangered our colonies, and narrowed the limits of our commercial enterprise.

“The worth of such actions,” says a recent writer, referring to Greenville's battle with the Spaniards, “is not a thing to be decided in a quaver of sensibility or a flash of righteous common-sense. The man who wished to

make the ballads of his country, coveted a small matter compared to what Richard Greenville accomplished. I wonder how many people have been inspired by this mad story, and how many battles have been actually won for England in the spirit thus engendered! It is only with a measure of habitual foolhardiness that you can be sure, in the common run of men, of courage on a reasonable occasion. An army or a fleet, if it is not led by quixotic fancies, will not be led far by terror of the provost-marshall. Nor is it only in the profession of arms that such stories may do good to a man. It is not over the virtues of a curate and tea-party novel that people are abashed into high resolutions. It may be because their hearts are crass; but to stir them properly they must have men entering into glory with some pomp and circumstance. And that is why these stories of our sea-captains, printed, so to speak, in capitals, and full of bracing moral influence, are more valuable to England than any material benefit, in all the books of political economy between Westminster and Birmingham. Greenville chewing wine-glasses at table makes no very pleasant figure, any more than a thousand other artists when they are viewed in the body, or met in private life; but his work of art, his finished tragedy, is an eloquent performance; and, I contend, it ought not only to enliven men of the sword as they go into battle, but send back merchant-clerks with more heart and spirit to their book-keeping by double-entry."

This is a long quotation; but it expresses very exactly our own sentiments. We hold that Sir Richard Greenville's self-sacrifice was a distinct gain to his country; and that without such deeds of lofty disregardful valour,

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the aggregate national courage, the spirit of the race, would rapidly deteriorate.

Such being our conclusion, we find ourselves unable to defend the conduct of Lord Thomas Howard in abandoning the Revenge to her fate. It is said, indeed, that his crew refused to obey him when he himself would fain have cut through the press of Spanish ships to the assistance of his comrade. But had he had the *will* of a Greenville, his crew would not have dared to stand up against him ; and if it be true that his sailors were willing to let their fellow-countrymen perish, why, the necessity of such an act as Greenville's, even within three years or so of the glories of "England's Salamis," becomes apparent. It is pleasant to recall that Captain Thomas Vavasour, of the Foresight, was made of better stuff. For ten hours he hovered as near the Revenge as the winds would permit ; nor did he retire until he stood in imminent danger of being surrounded by the Spanish ships. The other English vessels poured broadsides occasionally into the crowd of galleons, until, under cover of the night, they sailed away into safety.

Some days later the Spanish fleet was overtaken by a terrible storm, which scattered it far and wide over the ocean. The Revenge,—as if Providence, in honour of the spirit of her brave captain, were unwilling that she should remain a trophy in the hands of Spaniards,—was cast away upon the Island of St Michael, together with fourteen of the Spanish galleons and galleys. "And thus," says Raleigh, "it pleased them to honour the burial of that renowned ship, the Revenge, not suffering her to perish alone, for the great honour she achieved in her lifetime."

Our most popular living poet has recently told in noble verse the story of Greenville's heroic act. We venture to quote a few stanzas :—

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,

But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;

Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.

For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more—

God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before ?

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap

That he dared her with one little ship and his English few ;  
Was he devil or man ? He was devil for aught they knew,

But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,  
And they mann'd the "Revenge" with a swarthier alien crew,

And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own ;  
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,

And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,

And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,

And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,

And the little "Revenge" herself went down by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

V.

*A THREE DAYS' BATTLE.*

A.D. 1653.

“They that the whole world’s monarchy design’d,  
Are to their ports by our bold fleets confin’d,  
From whence our Red Cross they triumphant see,  
Riding without a rival on the sea !”

*Edmund Waller.*

EW of our old Sea-Kings have left a brighter name, none earned a purer fame, than Robert Blake, “Admiral and General at Sea” in the days of the Commonwealth. He had not been bred to the naval service, and was fifty years of age when he first undertook the command of a fleet. That was in April 1649. He soon showed special qualities as a “sea-general;” the power of enforcing discipline, of inspiring his men with confidence, and *of beating the enemy*—the last, we take it, the highest of all qualities in a commander, but not always given to the boldest warrior or the most accomplished seaman. A seaman, indeed, in the technical sense of the word, Blake can hardly have been, and for the manœuvring of his ships he unquestionably trusted to his vice-admirals and captains. But in the higher tactics, in the





HOW BLAKE THRASHED THE DUTCH.

art of so combining his movements as to win victory from the most formidable opponents, he was unequalled among the naval commanders of his age. And, in truth, it was Blake who made England a great power at sea, and who taught his countrymen that their navy might be utilized as a means of attack as well as of defence ; might be utilised so as to give them an influential voice in the councils of Europe. This was Blake's special work ; and along with this, or rather as a part of it, it fell to him to deal a heavy blow at the maritime strength of Holland —a blow so heavy, that it never entirely recovered from the shock.

Robert Blake was associated with Generals Monk and Deane in command of the fine fleet of sixty ships that sailed from Queensborough, in the Isle of Sheppey, on the 10th of February, 1653. William Penn, an able and experienced seaman, was the vice-admiral. In the Dover Straits the fleet was strengthened by a squadron of 20 sail from Portsmouth ; and Blake then set out to find the Dutch, who were known to be on their way back from the Isle of Rhè. The Dutch were splendid sailors, and admirable fighting men—the toughest adversaries, indeed, whom our English have ever met at sea. In the preceding November they had taken two ships from Blake, having surprised him with a greatly superior force ; and Van Tromp, their admiral, had thereupon hoisted a banner at his masthead to indicate that he had swept the English from the waters.

Van Tromp was in command of the Dutch fleet which, on the 18th of February, the English admiral sighted, as it arrived off the cliffs of Portland. His lieutenants, De Ruyter and Evertzen, were, like Van Tromp him-

self, of long-proved ability and courage. They had seventy-three ships against Blake's eighty; but on the whole, these were so much larger and more heavily armed, as fully to compensate for the numerical inferiority. A more serious consideration was the rich convoy of three hundred merchant vessels which they had under their charge; and these Van Tromp would probably have carried into the Scheldt in safety, as, with the wind in his favour, he might easily have done, had he not perceived that Blake, with Penn and Lawson (the English rear-admiral) and seventeen men-of-war, had pushed some miles in advance of Monk and Deane, and the main body of the fleet. To crush this advanced squadron of twenty ships, before the others came up, seemed to Van Tromp a thing possible and desirable. Accordingly he ordered the traders to beat to windward and slacken sail, that they might act as applauding spectators of the coming victory. Then, with his powerful fleet in admirable trim, and his men fully sharing in his own confidence, he bore down, in a line representing a half-moon, upon the English van.

The Triumph, with Blake and Deane on board, met the first shock. Van Tromp in the Brederode, favoured by the wind, swept rapidly past her, pouring in a heavy broadside; and then suddenly tacking and bringing up under her lee, hurled at her another volley from his great guns, which shivered her masts into splinters, and strewed her decks with dead and wounded. Fortunately for Blake, the Speaker, which carried Penn's flag, and three or four other vessels, came up at this moment, and drew off from the Triumph some of the enemies that were crowding round her. All the advanced ships were soon engaged, and a

furious struggle ensued. Overwhelmed by numbers, the *Prosperus*, the *Assistance*, and the *Oak*, were compelled to haul down their flags. But, to Van Tromp's annoyance, the English fought so doggedly, and with such a stubborn patience, that *Monk* and the main body of the fleet had time to come up and equalise the combat. A Dutch man-of-war blew up with a terrible explosion, and hotter than before raged the deadly battle. The *Prosperous*, the *Oak*, and the *Assistance* were retaken; and before night the current of the fight turned strongly against Van Tromp. At length, observing that Blake had despatched some frigates and fast-sailing ships against the convoy, he fell back to protect it, having lost eight men-of-war, either sunk or taken; while others had suffered so severely that their weakened crews had to be removed and distributed among the fleet. On both sides the loss in killed and wounded had been severe; but Blake had lost only one ship, the *Sampson*, from which, her captain and nearly all her crew having been slain, he had taken out the few survivors, and then suffered her to drift away. The murderous character of this engagement, and of other engagements between the same enemies, is explained by the fact, that there was little or no manœuvring, but that the ships fought at close quarters, lying alongside of one another, and "pounding away" until further resistance became impossible.

Blake, during the night, sent on shore his wounded men; and though badly wounded in the thigh, energetically prepared for a renewal of the struggle on the following day. Guns were cleaned, dangerous shot-holes examined and stopped up; masts were strengthened,

and sails refitted ; while those ships whose shattered condition rendered them unseaworthy were ordered to put into the nearest ports.

The next morning was bright and sunny, and the Dutch fleet was hauling the wind about seven leagues from Weymouth. It was again drawn up in the form of a crescent, the convex side of which faced the English, while in the hollow were collected some two hundred merchantmen, the rest having taken to their heels during the night. What wind there was favoured the Dutch, who, under press of canvas, stood steadily up the Channel. About noon, as is usual in the Channel, the breeze veered, and Blake gradually closed upon the enemy. About two, all his ships came up with them off Dungeness. Van Tromp had had enough of fighting, and was anxious for the safety of his convoy ; but an engagement being inevitable, he ordered his merchants to keep the French shore for protection, and make for the nearest Dutch port, while he turned upon the pursuers and held them at bay. On both sides the battle was renewed with fierce energy. De Ruyter specially distinguished himself by his skill and courage ; but he found in English seamen opponents worthy of him. After a long and desperate contest, his ship became utterly unmanageable, and would have fallen into Blake's hands, had not Tromp discovered his danger, and made a supreme and successful effort to rescue him. After which Tromp began to fall back slowly towards Boulogne, "still, however, contesting every wave, and the mingled roar and battle lasted until night again separated the hostile hosts."

The Dutch had had the worst of it. They had lost

five men-of-war, either taken or destroyed; and some of the captains were so discouraged, that they declared any further attempt to resist the English would be useless. Tromp ordered them to take up a position to the windward, and begged them to put on, at least, so much of a warlike front and gallant mien as might deter the English frigates from an attack upon the convoy.

Blake continued the pursuit all night, and at nine o'clock on the 20th the battle was renewed. Tromp, with his shattered and weakened fleet, had abandoned all hope of victory, and aimed at nothing more than holding Blake back while his richly-laden traders ran into the ports of Holland. But the fury of the English attack was such, that he soon came to doubt his ability to prove any effectual barrier; and sent pressing orders to the merchants to crowd sail and make for Calais, as he could hardly promise more than a few hours' protection. As the vehemency of the battle increased, he sent fresh commands; unless they moved more nimbly, the English frigates would be upon them. They were baffled by the wind, however, which blew from the French coast, so that only a few of the swiftest sailors got into the safety of neutral waters. By this time the Dutch had lost half their fleet, sunk, captured, or fugitive; and many of the captains, rebelling against Tromp's persistency in a fruitless struggle, began to retreat upon the flying convoy. Then, indeed, all was over. A scene of the wildest confusion followed. Some of the English frigates drove into the disordered array; and the traders, in their alarm, run foul of each other, knocked themselves to pieces, or fell helplessly into the hands of the enemy. Maintaining a running fight with the retreating men-of-

war, Blake arrived in the midst of this strange chase late in the afternoon; and finding several ships running against him, as if desirous of being captured, he formed the idea, says Hepworth Dixon, that this was a stratagem of Van Tromp's to delay his victorious pursuit, and gain time for rallying some part of the broken fleet. He gave orders, therefore, that every man-of-war in a condition still to pursue and fight the enemy should follow up the main body with all speed, leaving the frigates to deal with the merchant ships. So the chase continued until the shades of night gathered over the Channel. Glad was the discomfited Dutch admiral to anchor the remnant of his fleet in French waters, about four miles from Calais; where he waited and watched, until, the darkness increasing and the wind rising, he contrived to slip away towards Dunkirk, unperceived by his great antagonist. When morning dawned, not a Dutch warship was visible. Blake being in no condition, after three days' hard fighting, to venture among the sandbanks and shallows of the coast of Holland, stood over towards England, and on the 24th arrived safely with his prizes, in Stokes' Bay, off the Isle of Wight.

In this three days' action the Dutch lost about eighteen men-of-war, and between fifty and sixty valuable merchant vessels. Three Dutch captains were taken, seven killed. The English had one ship sunk, the Sampson; and three captains killed. On both sides the loss of life was heavy; but the exact numbers cannot be accurately ascertained.

## VI.

### *BLAKE AT SANTA CRUZ.*

A.D. 1657.

E was the first man," says Lord Clarendon, no partial eulogist, in portraying the character of the great Puritan Sea-King, "he was the first man that declined the old track, and made it manifest that the science (of managing a fleet) might be attained in less time than was imagined; and despised those rules which had long been in practice, to keep his ship and his men out of danger, which had been held in former times a point of great ability and circumspection, as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come home safe again. He was the first that infused that proportion of courage into the seamen, and making them see by experience what mighty things they could do if they were resolved, and taught them to fight in fire as well as upon water; and though he had been very well imitated and followed, he was the first that drew the copy of naval courage, and bold and resolute achievement."

Of all Blake's resolute and bold achievements, none surpassed in daring of conception and vigour of execution

that which closed his noble career—the attack upon Santa Cruz.

It was in the spring of 1657, that the great admiral received intelligence of the arrival of the Peru treasure-fleet of Spain, consisting of six “royal galleons” and sixteen other great ships, in one of the Canary Islands. It had put in thither for safety, its commander being mortally afraid of the “terrible Blake,” who at the time was blockading Cadiz. It seemed to Blake that he could not do better than go and take so splendid a prize. Accordingly, he recalled his scattered force, and with twenty-five men-of-war and frigates, set sail, on the 13th of April, for the Canaries. In spite of the precautions he had observed, information of his movements, and their probable object, reached Don Diego Diagues, the Spanish governor at Santa Cruz, and he proceeded to exhaust the resources of military science in strengthening a port which art and nature had already rendered impregnable. The harbour resembled in shape a horse-shoe. The western side of the entrance was defended by a regular castle, armed with heavy ordnance, and well garrisoned. Along the inner side of the bay ran a series of seven powerful batteries, connected with the castle and with each other by a line of earthworks; so that the entire circuit bristled with guns and musketry. In addition, the treasure fleet had been made to contribute to the defensive force. The gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, had been landed, and only the less valuable freightage—sugar, spices, cochineal, and hides—remained on board. The royal galleons lined either side of the narrow mouth of the harbour; their anchors out, and their broadsides turned towards the sea. The other armed vessels were

moored inside in a semicircle, but with intervals between them sufficiently wide to allow of the free action of the level batteries.

On the morning of Monday, April 20th, Blake's fleet, when about three leagues off Santa Cruz, was sighted by a Dutch captain whose vessel was lying in the roadstead, and he immediately repaired to the Spanish governor, and asked permission to depart. He knew something of Blake's rough method of dealing with his enemies, and had no desire to come into contact with him. Don Diego pointed to his castle, his earthworks, his forts and galleons, and assured him that they would effectually prevent the approach of the enemy. "Nevertheless," said the Dutchman, "spite of batteries and ships, I am confident that Blake will soon be among you." "Well," answered the Spaniard haughtily, "go if thou wilt, and let Blake come if he desire."

Blake at this time was in failing health ; but the scent of coming battle roused him from his sick-bed, and as soon as he was well in sight of the frowning armour of Santa Cruz, he called a council of war. His proposal was to force his way into the grimly-guarded harbour, and as the breeze blowing inshore would prevent the removal of the galleons, to destroy them where they lay at anchor. In spite of the apprehensions of some of the more cautious captains, that the attempt might result in disaster, the majority had imbibed so much of Blake's own daring spirit that they joyously assented to his plan. At half-past six prayers were read and breakfast served on board every ship in the fleet. A division of the largest vessels, under Rear-Admiral Stayner, was then detached with orders to attack the Spanish galleons ; while Blake

himself, with the remainder of the fleet, engaged the land defences.

The rear-admiral steered gallantly into the storm of fire which was hurled from the castle and line of batteries, and from the vessels that filled the harbour. Suffering nothing, however, to divert his attention from the special object of his attack, he was soon engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with the galleons. Meanwhile Blake, in his flag-ship, the *Swiftsure*, with the remainder of the fleet, began to cannonade the land batteries, and take off their fire from the rear-admiral's flank. For some hours the attack and defence were equally vigorous; but at last the skill and resolution of the English gunners prevailed. The batteries were silenced one by one, and the whole line of earthworks was so far subdued, that Blake, leaving a few frigates to complete the work, was able to hasten to the assistance of Stayner. The issue of the fight was soon placed beyond doubt. Two galleons were sunk at their moorings, and every other Spanish vessel in the ill-fated port was soon on fire. For miles around the skies were lighted up, red and lurid, by the rolling eddying flames. Before evening the work was done; and not a sail, not a spar was left above water. "The charred hulls floated hither and thither. Some of them filled and sank. Others were thrown upon the strand. Here and there a burnt mass projected from the surface; but not a single ship—not a single cargo—escaped destruction."

If to enter the harbour had been a work of danger, to leave it was scarcely an easier task. Fresh artillerists had been sent to man the guns of the fortifications, and a heavy fire was recommenced, which did the English ships

much damage. The comparatively small number of killed and wounded (fifty of the former and one hundred and fifty of the latter) shows, however, that it was not very well directed. The wind veering towards the south-west, Blake was able to carry his ships out of danger, and was soon steering for Spanish waters, after the successful performance of one of the most remarkable enterprises recorded in the annals of naval warfare. "The whole action," says Clarendon, "was so miraculous, that all men who knew the place concluded that no sober man, with what courage soever endowed, would ever undertake it; whilst the Spaniards comforted themselves with the belief that they were devils and not men who had destroyed them in such a manner. And it can hardly be imagined how small loss the English sustained in this unparalleled action; not one ship being left behind, and the killed and wounded not exceeding two hundred men, when the slaughter on board the Spanish ships and on the shore was incredible."



## VII.

### *CAPTAIN DOUGLAS AND THE ROYAL OAK.*

A.D. 1667.

O greater shame has ever befallen England than befell her in the year 1667, when a Dutch fleet appeared in the Thames, sailed unopposed up the river Medway, and in the very teeth of English forts and guns ascended as far as Upnor Castle. English armies and English navies had on former occasions been defeated, but never before had they been disgraced. They had been overpowered by superior numbers, or by that fortune of war against which conduct and valour cannot always prevail. But on this occasion they were dishonoured ; not, indeed, through any want of the old courage in the hearts of seaman or soldier, but through the criminal neglect of a dissolute Court and an incapable Ministry. When the Dutch fleet of seventy ships, under De Ruyter, appeared in the Nore, neither ships nor forts were manned, and not a shot was fired to stay their progress up the river. The English forces hastened to assemble a small fleet to prevent the enemy from passing Sheerness. The sense of their

Albemarle made all haste to Tidemill, an embankment to provide her a posture of defence. But he found there only a few hundred of dockyard men, and all he could do was to sink some ships in the Medway so as to obstruct his channel, and to erect a couple of rifle and field batteries.

On the morning of the 28th of June, De Ruyter, assisted by a high tide and a strong west wind, turned his fleet into the Medway, easily silenced the batteries, and proceeded to assault Upnor Castle. This fort however, was so strongly defended that the Dutch made little impression upon it. They then directed their fire against the men-of-war which lay at anchor in the river; and as these were utterly defenceless, the crews were soon overpowered. Three of them, the Royal London, the Great James, and the Royal Oak, were burned to the water's edge; and one the Royal Charles, was carried away as a memorial of victory. In connection with the destruction of the Royal Oak, occurred an incident which has for ever thrown a pure and beautiful light into the heart, as it were, of this dark story.

Captain Douglas, the commander of the Royal Oak, had made the stoutest defence he could, and done his best to keep off the fire-ships. But the Dutch fire-ships succeeded in setting the ship on fire, and the flames spread with a rapidity which it is difficult to express. The crew sprang to the pumps, as hard as they could, but the flames were too rapid to be controlled. The



“Never was it known,” he exclaimed, “that a Douglas quitted his post without orders!” And, calm and resolved, he remained upon the burning poop, the only man who on that day upheld the high renown of England.

“Down on the deck he laid himself and died,  
With his dear sword reposing at his side;  
And on the flaming plank he rests his head,  
As one that warmed himself and went to bed.  
His ship burns down, and with his relics sinks,  
And the sad stream beneath his ashes drinks.  
Fortunate boy! if either pencil’s fame,  
Or if my verse can propagate thy name,  
When CÆta and Alcides are forgot,  
Our English youth shall sing the valiant Scot.”



## VIII.

### *THE CENTURION AND THE SPANISH GALLEON.*

A.D. 1743.



O Commodore Anson, an officer of ability and experience, was entrusted, in the summer of 1740, the command of an expedition destined to attack and capture the Spanish city of Manila, in the Philippine Islands. The squadron consisted of six ships—the Centurion, 60 guns ; the Gloucester, 50 guns ; the Severn, 50 ; the Pearl, 40 ; the Wager, 20 ; and the Trial sloop, 8 guns—with two transports of 400 and 200 tons respectively. At this time the naval administration of Great Britain was notoriously inefficient. Anson's ships were in want of repair and indifferently equipped ; while the military force which they carried was made up of small detachments of "aged and decrepit invalids." The expedition was foredoomed to failure.

It was not until the 10th of September that Anson sailed from Spithead ; and owing to the indifferent qualities of his ships, he was forty days reaching Madeira. Thence he proceeded to the Brazils. Baffled by heavy seas and contrary winds, his squadron suffered severely on the protracted voyage. Disease broke out among his crews, and

when he made the Island of St Catherine, on the Brazilian coast, he was compelled to land his invalids (eighty from the *Centurion* alone), and shelter them in tents. In spite of all his care, one-fifth of the number died. In January 1741, Anson resumed his voyage. After clearing the Straits of Lemaire, he was overtaken by a terrible storm. "The lurid cloud-drifts came scudding up the horizon ; the winds gathered ; the waters heaved with tumultuous throes ; snow and sleet fell blindingly around them ; the storm-tossed vessels were hurled from side to side with so dread a violence that many men were flung about the decks and killed outright. An affecting incident occurred at this conjuncture. A sailor belonging to the *Centurion* fell overboard. He swam well : he swam bravely and strongly, still keeping his face towards the vessel, and straining his aching eyes for the relief his comrades could not afford him. Such was the fury of the storm, the ship could not be put about, and it sped away with terrible swiftness from the drowning mariner—

‘ Who still renewed the strife,  
Upheld by buoyant hope and love of life ; ’

but was at length outworn by the wrestling waters, and compelled to yield the unequal struggle."

Early in April the unfortunate squadron was caught in another and even more violent hurricane, during the prevalence of which, the *Wager*, a 28-gun frigate, was driven so far away to leeward, that she was unable to rejoin her consorts. There are few more pathetic narratives in the records of the sea than that of the *Wager*'s extraordinary experiences, and of the sufferings of her crew, as told by one of her midshipmen, the Hon. John Byron. Here,

however, I can only state, that on the 15th of May, the ship was wrecked on the coast of America. Compelled to abandon her, the crew landed upon a desert and desolate island, which they appropriately named Mount Misery. After remaining in this "sea-girt waste" for several months, they embarked in the cutter and long-boat on the perilous enterprise of returning home through the Straits of Magellan. The cutter was lost, but the long-boat, after a difficult and distressing voyage of upwards of a thousand leagues, contrived to reach the Portuguese settlements in Brazil. After enduring the most terrible sufferings, the survivors were fortunate enough to regain their homes in 1745. Their hardships are picturesquely described by Campbell in his *Pleasures of Hope*; and to Byron's narrative, his grandson, Lord Byron, was largely indebted for his sea-scenes in *Don Juan*.

The ill-fitted ships of Anson's expedition were wholly incapable of contending with the series of violent gales that persistently afflicted them. One by one they had to be abandoned, their weakened crews being transferred to Anson's flagship, the Centurion, which at last became the sole representative of the squadron destined for the capture of the Philippines. Prior to this result being arrived at, Anson had carried his own vessel to the island of Juan Fernandez, there to wait for the Gloucester and the Trial, and rest and refresh his crew, who had been stricken down by scurvy. Of the ravages of this fearful disease, due to imperfect ventilation and want of proper food, we gain some idea, when we learn that it carried off forty-three victims in one month. In the month of May, the Centurion lost ninety more of her inadequate comple-

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ment; and before she dropped anchor off Juan Fernandez, on the 9th of June, upwards of 250 sailors and soldiers had perished. This pleasant island, connected with the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, the original of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, seemed a very paradise to Anson's worn and weary men, and they rapidly revived their health and spirits. The Trial arrived a few days after the Centurion, and on the 21st of June the Gloucester hove in sight, but was again driven off to windward. When she reappeared, five days later, Anson sent his boats to her assistance, with a supply of fish, fresh water, and vegetables. Just in time! The ill-fated vessel was converted into a floating hospital; she had lost two-thirds of her crew, and it was impossible to look without emotion on the wan faces and gaunt figures of the survivors. The boats returned to the island for more provisions, but meanwhile, the unfortunate Gloucester again drove out to sea; and when for the third time she rejoined the commodore, on the 23d of July, her condition was indescribably loathsome.

Anson remained at Juan Fernandez until the 19th of September, when he again put to sea, with a Spanish prize, the Monte Carmelo, captured by the Centurion a few days before, which had been fitted out as a cruiser. A Spanish merchant ship was taken shortly afterwards, to which the crew of the Trial was transferred, the latter being destroyed. Keeping along the American coast, Anson obtained information which induced him to plan a descent upon the town of Paita. At midnight, on the 11th of November, having selected a picked body of sixty volunteers, he despatched his boats against the port, which was protected by a strong battery and garrisoned

by 300 soldiers. Gliding into the bay, under cover of the darkness, they reached the mouth of the inner harbour before an alarm was given. Then the crew of a trader lying at anchor in the stream raised a cry of "Los Ingleses!" "Los Ingleses!" and leaping into their skiff, made for the shore. Our British tars, however, "gave way" with such lusty good will, that the little band of volunteers were upon the enemy before they could make any preparations for defence. The town and fort were quickly captured, and a considerable booty having been collected, the expedition returned in triumph, without the loss of a single man.

Anson had been compelled, by the weakened condition of his small squadron, to abandon all hope of successful attack upon Manilla, which was known to be strongly defended; but unwilling to return to England without striking some vigorous and successful blow at the enemy, he resolved upon intercepting, if possible, the great galleon, or treasure ship, which sailed yearly, with the produce of the Spanish mines, from Acapulco to Manilla. Having ascertained that this "golden argosy" was expected to leave the former port on the 3d of March, 1742, Anson immediately beat towards it; and, on the 1st of the month, arrived off the rounded hills, known to seamen as "the Paps of Acapulco," disposing his ships, at about fifteen leagues from the shore, in a semi-circle, so as to command a sweep of sea not much less than eighty miles in breadth. The Governor of Acapulco, however, had conjectured the object of Anson's movements, and effectually baffled them by detaining the treasure-ship in the secure shelter of Acapulco harbour,

until want of water compelled the English squadron to give up its fruitless watch, and bear away for China.

In a gale on the 26th of July, the Gloucester sprang a leak, and was soon reduced to so complete a wreck as to necessitate the removal of her crew to the Centurion. On board the flag-ship, the insufficient accommodation and bad quality of the provisions threatened a return of scurvy, which induced Anson to make for Tinian, one of the Ladrones. There he disembarked his invalids on 27th August. A couple of months' rest restored the health of his crew; and on the 21st of October, Anson again put to sea, steering for Macao, on the coast of China.

It was the 19th of April, 1743, before Anson resumed his voyage. In the interval he had thoroughly refitted his vessels, recruited the energies of his men, and made good all deficiencies of stores and provisions. He resolved on another cruise in quest of the great treasure-ship. His men were highly delighted with the prospect of a brush with the Dons and a pocketful of doubloons; not doubting for a moment that the galleon would become their prize, if once the Centurion could be laid alongside. One day the commander, knowing the supply had not been exhausted, inquired why no mutton had recently made its appearance on the table:—"Certainly, your honour," replied the cook, "there are still a couple of sheep left in the galley; but I thought your honour would wish them kept for the dinners of the Spanish captain, whom your honour is going to take prisoner!"

On the last day of May, the Centurion came in sight of the Philippines, and cruised off Cape Espiritu Santo, waiting for the Acapulco argosy, the arrival of which at

Manilla he knew to be daily expected. Early in the morning of the 20th of June, the look-out described her tall masts in the offing, and immediately all sail was set up on the Centurion. The Spaniard showed no desire to avoid the contest; and as she carried forty-four guns and five hundred men, she might well calculate on defeating Anson, with his crew of only two hundred men and thirty boys. Hoisting the standard of Spain at her maintop-gallant-masthead, she lay-to in bold defiance of the English man-of-war. About one o'clock the action began; Anson laying his ship across the galleon's bows, and raking her decks with a terrible fire, which proved the proficiency in gunnery her crew had acquired through daily exercise. For two hours the fight was keen, and the Spaniards displayed a gallantry worthy of their old renown. But the skill and stubbornness of Anson's "Centurions" prevailed; and having lost sixty-seven men killed and eighty-four wounded, the galleon surrendered. At the cost of only two men killed and seventeen wounded, the commodore had captured one of Spain's largest and finest vessels, carrying a cargo valued at £313,000.

Returning with his prize to Macao, the Centurion refitted, and, taking on board a supply of provisions, sailed for England on the 15th of December. Her homeward voyage was prosperous; and on entering the Channel, she had the good luck to sail unobserved through a powerful French fleet, under cover of a dense fog. On the 15th of January, 1744, she dropped anchor at Spithead, having completed the circuit of the globe, and been absent from "home" for about three years and nine months.

## IX.

### *THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE.*

A.D. 1794.



N the morning of the 20th of May, 1794, a British fleet, under Lord Howe, consisting of twenty-six ships of the line and of seven frigates, was working down Channel with a fresh south-easterly wind, when it came in sight of a French fleet, under M. Villaret-Joyeuse, consisting of twenty-six ships of the line, and sixteen frigates and corvettes. Between the two fleets, as we see, there was a numerical disproportion strongly in favour of the French; but they had the advantage also in other respects—they had more guns (1107 broadsides against 1087) and heavier (they threw a weight of metal equal to 28,000 lbs., while the British cannon threw only 22,000 lbs.); and while the British crew numbered 17,421 men and boys, the French could muster 19,989.

Lord Howe immediately signalled to the Bellerophon, one of his swiftest ships, to stand towards the enemy and reconnoitre; and soon afterwards, the French being recognisable in full force, he issued orders to his fleet to prepare for action. The Russel, the Marlborough, and the Thunderer, moved ahead to support the Bellerophon,

while the main body of the fleet advanced under full sail in two columns. At ten minutes past eleven the ships' crews dined, Lord Howe being of opinion that they would fight none the worse for having satisfied their appetites. Meanwhile the two fleets drew nearer, and a stern struggle seemed inevitable ; when, about one o'clock, the French ships began to tack, as if desirous of avoiding a collision. Lord Howe ordered a general chase, and his advanced ships soon afterwards opened a smart fire on the enemy's rear. Scorning to run from the foe without exchanging shots, one of the French vessels, *La Révolutionnaire*, of one hundred and ten guns, exchanged places with the rearmost two-deckers, and waited for the English to come up. The *Bellerophon*, an eighty-gun ship, was the first to reach her, and she bravely fought her formidable antagonist for upwards of an hour and a quarter, when the dangerous condition of her main-mast compelled her captain to take her out of fire. The French three-decker had suffered even more severely from the steady gunnery of the British ; but as she wore round to join her comrades, the *Leviathan* came up and grappled with her, to be succeeded in her turn by the *Audacious*, a ship of seventy-four guns. A smart contest now ensued. It was very unequal ; but the *Révolutionnaire* had already gone through some hard fighting, and was unable to withstand the close persistent cannonade of the British man-of-war. Having lost four hundred killed and wounded, she at length hauled down her colours and surrendered. But her victor had suffered so much in her spars and rigging that she could not take possession of the prize ; and next day the French frigate *Audacieux* took her into tow, and carried her into Rochfort. By this

time it was pitch-dark night, and a dense rain increased the depth of the ocean-fog. The Audacious, losing sight of Lord Howe's fleet, ran for home, and reached Plymouth Sound in safety, on the 3d of June.

Meanwhile, the Bellerophon and her consorts had been recalled to the main body of the fleet, which, with lights at every mast-head, passed through the misty darkness of the night in close pursuit of the enemy. At daybreak, on the 29th of May, she was discovered about six miles to windward. Lord Howe immediately manœuvred with much skill so as to secure the weather-gage, and by eight o'clock got near enough to open fire. A desultory engagement ensued, in which, however, the fleets never came to close quarters, and Lord Howe had the mortification to find himself ill-supported by some of his best ships. Neither side could boast of any signal success as the result and reward of the day's fighting.

The 30th passed quietly, a heavy fog preventing the fleets from manœuvring ; and the 31st opened in cloud and mist. But soon after one o'clock, the weather cleared, revealing the French fleet at a distance of seven miles to leeward. Lord Howe immediately formed in line, but being still unable to bring the enemy to close quarters, he signalled to his captains to haul the wind on the larboard tack. As this manœuvre was imitated by the enemy, the English van was soon abreast of the French centre. A succession of movements occupied the remainder of the day, with the result of lessening the distance between the fleets ; and it became apparent that the morrow would in all probability bring about a decisive engagement.

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At daybreak on the 1st of June,—a date long memorable in our naval annals,—in lat.  $47^{\circ} 30'$  w., and long.  $18^{\circ} 30'$  w., with the wind blowing moderately from south by west, and the sea “tolerably smooth,” the French appeared about four or five miles to starboard of the British fleet, and steering in line of battle under heavy canvas. As his crews were much fatigued by the incessant labour of the preceding four days, Lord Howe hove to, and gave them their breakfast; after which, at about a quarter-past eight, he set all sail, and bore down upon the enemy, signalling for each ship to engage with any hostile ship she fell across. The British fleet was thus arranged:—Cæsar (van-ship), Bellerophon, Leviathan, Russel, Royal Sovereign, Marlborough, Defence, Impregnable, Tremendous, Barfleur, Invincible, Culloden, Gibraltar, Queen Charlotte (Lord Howe's flagship), Brunswick, Valiant, Orion, Queen, Ramillies, Alfred, Montagu, Royal George, Majestic, Glory, and Thunderer (twenty-five in all). These were formed in line abreast. The French were drawn up in close head-and-stern line, west to east, thus:—Trajan, Eole, Amerique, Téméraire, Terrible, Impétueux, Mucius, Tourville, Gasparin, Convention, Trente-un-Mai, Tyrannicide, Juste, Montagne, Jacobin, Achille, Vengeur, Patriote, Northumberland, Entreprenant, Jemmapes, Neptune, Pelletier, Républicain, Sanspareil, and Scipion (twenty-six). The frigates attached to both fleets were as usual stationed in the rear.

It was the intention of Lord Howe that each ship should cut through the French line *astern* of her opponent, and engage her to leeward; and in accordance with this intention the Queen, Valiant, and Orion, being

close together, agreed by signal to select the eighth, ninth, and tenth of the enemy's vessels as their special objects. The mismanagement of some of his captains, however, prevented the admiral's plan from being fully carried out. His own vessel, the Queen Charlotte, was the first to break the French line ; and after receiving and returning, as she passed by, the broadsides of the Achille and the Vengeur, she luffed up under the stern of the Montagne, and poured her guns into her with formidable effect. Howe, at this moment, in his desire to get alongside of his adversary, ordered Mr Bowen, the master, to starboard his helm. "If I do, my Lord, we shall run aboard the Jacobin," which had fallen abreast of the Montagne to leeward, and thus was in the very position Lord Howe had marked out for himself. "What is that to you?" said the admiral quickly. "Oh, just as you please," muttered Bowen. "I don't care, if *you* don't. I'll soon lay you near enough to singe some of our whiskers." Lord Howe smiled as he overheard the British seaman's characteristic grumble, and turning to his captain, observed, "That's a fine fellow, Curtis."

The Queen Charlotte soon forced her way in between the two Frenchmen, and fought them on each broadside with great spirit. The Montagne, in less than an hour, lost upwards of one hundred men killed, and two hundred wounded ; and, sick of the pounding she had received, crowded all sail and ranged ahead. Her example was quickly followed by the Jacobin. The Queen Charlotte then turned upon the Juste, and with so much fury that in a few minutes she shot away her three masts. She herself was by this time too much shattered in spars

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and rigging to be easily manageable, or to be in a position to seek a new foe ; and, in truth, by this time the heat of the action was over.

We may now turn our attention to the Brunswick, which Captain Harvey handled with equal skill and courage. In running down for the French centre she lost one of her masts ; but she still pursued her way, and closed simultaneously with the Queen Charlotte. Her captain had intended to pass between the Jacobin and the ship next to her, but the French array was so compact that he was compelled to bear up for another opening, which he found between the Vengeur and the Patriote. The former, to foil his design, shot ahead ; and as Captain Harvey thereupon ported his helm, the two vessels fell alongside of each other, the starboard anchors of the Brunswick catching in the forechains of the Vengeur. "Shall I cut her clear ?" said Stewart, the master, to his captain. "No ! we have got her, and we will keep her!" The two ships lay so close, however, that the crew of the Brunswick were unable to haul up eight of her starboard ports, from the third port abaft, and actually blew them off. Thus linked in deadly embrace, the antagonists drifted away a mile or so from the two fleets, and engaged in a furious contest. For an hour the firing continued ; and then the crew of the Brunswick, through a rift in the smoke-clouds, discovered another French line-of-battle ship, with boarders ready in her rigging and on her decks, bearing down on their larboard quarter. Nothing daunted, Captain Harvey, who was already wounded, ordered the lower-deck guns to prepare to receive her ; and their broadsides were delivered with such effect that the Achille soon lay a dismasted

hulk upon the waves. She then struck her flag ; but as the Brunswick was too disabled to take possession of her, she rehoisted it, and rigging up a jury sail endeavoured to escape.

Fortunately, at this juncture, the Ramillies came up to the assistance of the Brunswick, her crew, as they drew near, waving their caps, and making signs to their comrades to cut the Vengeur adrift, so that they might "tackle" her ; but the two ships were so closely grappled that this was not easily done. They had been engaged, yard-arm to yard-arm, for three hours, before they swung clear of each other ; and then the Vengeur, in falling off, carried away the three anchors from the Brunswick's bows. The latter, as she drifted, sent a farewell shot at her adversary, which split the rudder, shattered the stern-post, and battered a large hole in her counter, through which the water immediately poured. The Ramillies was then content to leave the Brunswick to settle with her enemy, and turned her attention to the Achille, which was using every effort to slip away.

Lying across the Vengeur's bows, the Brunswick raked her decks with a crushing fire, which soon brought down her fore and main masts, as well as part of the mizzen. An attempt of her crew to board the Brunswick was baffled by the bayonets of a company of the 29th regiment. Further resistance being useless, she ceased to fire at one o'clock of the afternoon. Her tricolor had been shot away. She therefore hoisted a union jack over her quarters, and solicited assistance, for she was sinking fast. This the Brunswick could not give, her boats having been shattered into fragments ; but her desperate condition being perceived by the Alfred and

Culloden, they lowered as many of their boats as could swim, and despatched them to the scene of distress. Upwards of four hundred men were taken off the wreck ; but between thirty or forty, besides the badly wounded, could not be removed in time, and went down with her.

The condition of the Brunswick was not much better than that of her late antagonist. Her mizzen-mast was gone, and her main and fore masts were seriously injured ; while her sails hung in tatters from her broken yards, and her rigging was rent to pieces. She had lost forty-seven men killed, and a hundred and eighteen wounded, many of them being burned and scalded in a terrible manner by combustibles which the French had flung in at the port-holes, contrary to the usages of civilized warfare. Her gallant captain had handled her with splendid energy, and his example had roused his crew to a heroic standard of tenacious, patient courage. After the destruction of the Vengeur, he felt, however, that his ship had done her duty, and was in too crippled a condition to rejoin the fleet. While he and his officers were deliberating, they discovered two ships at the end of the French line, bearing down on their shattered vessel. He immediately gave orders that the Brunswick should be fought to the last, and should never haul down her colours. Fortunately, no further sacrifice was required, as the French men-of-war tacked about, and made for the French coast.

Early in the action, Captain Harvey had lost three of the fingers of his right hand by a musket ball ; but concealing the fact, he bound up the wound with his handkerchief, and continued to give his orders. Afterwards he was thrown to the deck, and stunned by a violent con-

receiving at the hands of the crew a special amount of attention.

After conducting for some time a spirited contest with the *Mucius* and the *Impétueux*, the *Marlborough* was called upon to stand a broadside from the *Montagne*, which wounded her gallant captain. His place, however, was well filled by Lieutenant John Monckton. The heroism of her men met with the reward it deserved, for both her adversaries hauled down their colours. The *Impétueux*, which had been converted into a mere charnel-house, was secured by the *Russel*, but the *Mucius* eventually escaped. As for the shot-torn but victorious *Marlborough*, she was compelled to signal for assistance, and was taken in tow by the *Aquilon*.

Had all the British ships been fought as stubbornly as were the *Marlborough*, the *Royal George*, the *Queen Charlotte*, the *Defence*, the *Russel*, and the *Ramillies*, few of the Frenchmen would have escaped. Unhappily, some of Howe's captains lacked their leader's resolute and courageous spirit. On the whole, however, the battle of the first of June was well contested, and splendidly successful, considering that Nelson had not yet taught our admirals to be content with nothing less than the destruction of the hostile fleet. Howe had captured six men-of-war and sunk one. His country had reason to be satisfied with him, and he with his sailors. When, on the following day, the crew of the *Queen Charlotte* asked, through their officers, to be allowed to congratulate him on his victory, he received them on the quarter-deck, and, in reply to their rough but hearty address, exclaimed—“No! no! It is *I* who should thank *you*, my brave fellows! for it was *you* who won the battle.”

Two or three anecdotes, in connection with this glorious day, remain to be told. While the Marlborough was so fiercely contending with the Impétueux, one of her seamen boldly leaped on board the latter, to "pay the Moosoos a visit," and when invited to take a sword to defend himself, he replied, "I'll find one where I am going." He was as good as his word; returning in safety with a couple of French cutlasses in his hand.

The figure-head of the Brunswick represented the duke "of that ilk," wearing a regulation "cocked hat." In the action it was struck off by a chance shot. The crew immediately went aft, and petitioned the captain to give them another "out of respect to the duke." Receiving one of Captain Harvey's own cocked hats, they prevailed upon the carpenter to nail it on the denuded figure-head, and there it remained throughout the fray.

A young middy serving on board the flag-ship was exposed to such imminent danger that the admiral, compassionating his few years, ordered him to descend between decks. The heroic lad, looking up into "Black Willie's" face, with the modesty of true courage, respectfully replied, "What would my father say, my Lord, were I not on the deck during the action?"

"Howe made the Frenchmen dance a tune,  
An admiral great and glorious;  
Witness for that the First of June,—  
Lord! how he was victorious!"

## X.

### *ST VALENTINE'S DAY.*

A.D. 1797.



ARLY in 1797, Sir John Jervis was commander-in-chief of the British fleet in the Mediterranean. England was then at war with France, Spain, and Holland, and it became Sir John Jervis's duty to prevent the fleets of these three Powers from effecting a junction, which would have given them supremacy in the narrow seas. His force, however, was inadequate to the task laid upon him. A powerful French fleet lay in Toulon harbour; the Spanish fleet at Cadiz was nearly twice as large as his own; and another Spanish fleet of twenty-six ships of the line and two frigates, which had left Cartagena, on the 1st of February, was steering for the Mediterranean. To intercept this fleet before the French could join it became the primary object of the English admiral; and though he had only ten men-of-war under his flag, he put to sea.

On the 6th of February, he was happily reinforced by Rear-Admiral Parker, with five sail of the line; and a week later the *Minerve* frigate brought him the valuable aid of Commodore Nelson, who immediately hoisted his

broad pendant on board the 74-gun ship Captain. Sir John Jervis's fleet was then composed as follows:— Victory, 100, Admiral Sir John Jervis, Captains Robert Calder and George Grey; Britannia, 100, Vice-Admiral Thompson, Captain Foley; Barfleur, 98, Vice-Admiral Waldegrave, Captain Dacres; Prince George, 98, Rear-Admiral Parker, Captain Irwin; Blenheim, 98, Captain Frederick; Namur, 90, Captain Whitshed; Captain, 74, Commodore Nelson, Captain Miller; Goliath, 74, Captain Sir Charles Knowles; Excellent, 74, Captain Collingwood; Orion, 74, Captain Sir James Saumarez; Colossus, 74, Captain Murray; Egmont, 74, Captain Sutton; Culloden, 74, Captain Thomas Troubridge; Irresistible, 74, Captain Martin; Diadem, 64, Captain Towry; Minerve frigate, 38, Captain Cockburn; Lively, 32, Captain Lord Garlies; Niger, 32, Captain Foote; and Southampton, 32, Captain Macnamara.

On the evening of the 13th, the vanships of the British fleet came in sight of the enemy, within about eight leagues of the rocky promontory of Cape St Vincent. Sir John Jervis immediately hoisted the signal to prepare for battle, and to keep close order during the night. Meanwhile, the Spaniards endeavoured, by crowding on all sail, to get near the land, and slip into the harbour of Cadiz.

The morning of the 14th of February, St Valentine's Day, was dim and hazy; but as the sun rose, and the mists cleared off, the British could easily make out the strength of their enemy. The Spanish fleet, under Don Josef de Cordova, consisted of five-and-twenty men-of-war (one of 130 guns, six of 112, two of 80, and sixteen of 74), and twelve 34-gun frigates. The admiral's flag was

hoisted in the Santisima-Trinidad, a huge four-decker, which was probably the largest war ship afloat. The story runs, that as the forms of the Spanish ships hovered grandly through the morning mist, Captain Calder reported their numbers to his chief. "Ten sail of the line, Sir John." "Very well, sir." "Fifteen sail of the line, Sir John." "Very well, sir." "Twenty sail of the line, Sir John." "Very well, sir." "Twenty-three sail of the line, Sir John." No answer but—"Very well, sir." Captain Calder next reported "twenty-five," and added some remark on the risk of attacking so superior a force. "Enough, sir, enough," said the admiral, frowning angrily; "were there  *fifty* sail of the line, I'd go through them all." Captain Hallowell, who was on board the *Victory* as a passenger, and during this colloquy had been standing by the admiral, here so far forgot in his enthusiasm the rules of etiquette, that he clapped his hand on the chief's shoulder, exclaiming, "That's right, Sir John; and, by Jove, we'll give them a sound good licking!"

The British fleet advanced in two lines, with admirable compactness and regularity, for Sir John Jervis was a firm disciplinarian, and had trained the officers and crews under his command to obey his orders in a spirit of strict fidelity. The Spaniards, on the other hand, were sailing loosely, and had fallen into two groups, of which one was considerably to leeward of the other. The weather division, consisting of about nineteen ships, were also somewhat scattered, several of the ships doubling upon each other, while some were lying three abreast. On sighting the British fleet, and discerning its actual strength, the leeward ships all hauled on the same tack, and under a press of canvas struggled to rejoin their

consorts. But Sir John Jervis, having detected the serious fault of their disposition, determined to cut off the leeward division, and afterwards to attack the main body. At eleven o'clock, therefore, he signalled to his fleet to form in line of battle ahead and astern of the Victory, as might be most convenient, and steer to the south-south-west; a course which kept the enemy's lee-division, consisting of one three-decker (with a vice-admiral's flag), five two-deckers, and a few frigates, upon the lee or larboard bow.

The British fleet then stood close hauled on the starboard tack, in this order—Culloden, Blenheim, Prince George, Orion, Colossus, Irresistible, Victory, Egmont, Goliath, Barfleur, Britannia, Namur, Captain, Diadem, and Excellent. The Spanish admiral not unnaturally supposed that the object of the British was to fall upon his detached ships; but such was not their design. At a few minutes past noon, having passed the sternmost ships of the Spanish weather division, the Culloden, in obedience to signal, tacked to the larboard. The manœuvre was so skilfully and promptly performed as to draw from Sir John Jervis the exclamation—"Look, look at Troubridge! Does he not manœuvre as if all England were looking at him! 'Would to God all England were present to appreciate, as I do, the gallant captain of the Culloden!'"

The British ships hoisted their colours, tacking in succession according to the admiral's signals; and the Culloden began the battle by cannonading the Spanish weather division with her starboard guns. At this juncture a Spanish two-decker and two three-deckers crossed the head of the British line, and joined the leeward division,

which was thus augmented to eight sail of the line ; for one of the detached ships, thinking discretion the better part of valour, had crowded on all sail, and escaped to the south-east.

The Blenheim and Prince George had by this time got into action ; and the Spanish lee-division had drawn near enough to open fire on the British fleet. Their guns carried away the foreyard and foretopmast of the Colossus as she was in the act of going about ; so that she "missed stays," was obliged to wear, and, being thrown to leeward, fell under a raking fire from the leading three-decker in the Spanish lee-division. The latter division, about half-past twelve, while the Irresistible and the Orion pushed on to the support of the Culloden, endeavoured to break the British line ahead of the admiral ; but the Victory dexterously anticipated the movement, and the Spanish vice-admiral, being compelled to tack under her lee, was exposed to a broadside which shook her like a reed. She bore up in utter confusion, followed by the other ships of her division, with the exception of the Oriente, which succeeded in passing to leeward of the British fleet, and joining the Spanish van.

At one o'clock, Don Josef de Cordova, finding himself with only sixteen ships opposed to the British fifteen, resolved on another attempt to join his leeward division, hoping, amidst the smoke of battle, to conceal his movement from Jervis, and to surprise him by its rapidity. The British van had now tacked, and was bearing down on the weather division, while the van continued on the same tack, in order to strike into the Victory's wake, and then tack in succession, in obedience to Jervis's signal. But Nelson's quick eye detected the

Spanish admiral's intention, and at the risk of disobeying his commander-in-chief, he resolved to frustrate it. If he failed, the consequences to himself might be serious ; but, at all hazards, the enemy must be baffled. "They can but hang me, after all," was his reflection ; and ordering Captain Miller to wear the Captain, he passed between the Excellent and Diadem, and placed himself across the bows of the large Spanish four-decker as coolly as if she had been an opponent of his own size. He thus stopped the way against her, compelled her to haul to the wind, and drove her back upon the English advanced ships. A part of these then passed to leeward of the Spanish line to prevent any similar attempt to that which Nelson had so splendidly defeated ; while the others, led by the Victory, swept along the Spanish array to windward, and placed Cordova's vanships between a double fire. Nelson's daring manœuvre had been completely successful ; but he himself, separated from his comrades, was for some time exposed to the shot of the Santisima-Trinidad, 136 guns ; the San-Josef, 112 ; the Salvador-del-Mundo, 112 ; the San-Nicolas, 80 ; and the San-Ysidro, 74. Had their cannonade been well directed, it is difficult to believe that Nelson could have escaped being sunk. The Culloden came to his assistance for a while, and then passed on, leaving him to contend with his numerous foes. He was forced to get fresh supplies of shot out of the hold, those which were at hand having been exhausted by the rapid fire ; and he was doubtless glad when the Blenheim, Captain Frederick, ranged up, and took part in the unequal contest.

The latter was speedily engaged with the four-decker,

which did much damage to his sails and rigging. But Captain Frederick resolved to close with her. Backing his maintopsail, he cried, "Fire away, my brave fellows ! upon the Spanish admiral, and take him." His men plied their guns with ardour ; and there was need for all their enthusiasm, as the Blenheim, like the Captain, was surrounded by enemies ; lay, in fact, in the centre of a circle of fire. For an hour or more the struggle was very sharp ; but English steadiness proved equal to the trial. About three, some of her consorts came to the assistance of the Blenheim, and shortly afterwards the Santisima-Trinidad's "tall masts" went by the board. Battered and blackened like a hulk, she was towed out of the fight ; for though she had hauled down her flag to the Orion, the victors were in no condition to take possession of her.

When the Victory had tacked to the larboard, she made to windward of the Spanish fleet, followed by the Barfleur, Namur, Egmont, and Goliath. The latter two vessels, however, were so crippled in their top gear that they fell astern. Shortly after one o'clock, the admiral signalled to the Excellent to pass through the enemy's line ; and an hour later Collingwood brought her abreast of the three-decker, Salvador-del-Mundo, with which the Captain and Blenheim had been engaged. After pouring into her several destructive broadsides, he passed on to the San-Ysidro, which had already suffered heavily, and forced her to lower her colours. Then, observing Nelson's desperate position, he came up on the starboard side of the San-Nicolas, taking off her fire from the Captain, and giving her a little rest—a service which Nelson afterwards acknowledged char-

acteristically.<sup>1</sup> Having silenced the Spaniards, Collingwood made sail ahead.

The Captain now luffed up as close to the wind as her crippled condition permitted ; but as it was evident she would drop astern of the Spanish fleet, Nelson resolved on a final blow. The San-Nicolas, rent and disabled, had fallen on board the San-Josef : what was to prevent him from carrying both ships by boarding ? The Captain was soon placed on the starboard quarter of the former, with her spritsail-yard hooked in her mizzen chains ; and the order to board having been given, the British, with a loud cheer, pounced upon their enemy. Here is Nelson's own graphic account of this stirring incident in the great and glorious battle :—

" The soldiers of the 69th, with an alacrity which will ever do them credit, and Lieutenant Pearson, of the same regiment, were almost the foremost on this service. The first man who jumped into the enemy's mizzen chains was Captain Berry, late my first-lieutenant (Captain Miller was in the very act of going also, but I directed him to remain) : he was supported from our spritsail-yard, which hooked in the mizzen-rigging. A soldier of the 69th regiment having broken the upper quarter-gallery window, I jumped in myself, and was followed by others as fast as possible. I found the cabin-doors fastened : and some Spanish officers fired their pistols : but, having broken open the doors, the soldiers fired ; and the Spanish brigadier (commodore with a distinguishing pendant) fell, as retreating to the quarter-deck. I pushed immediately on

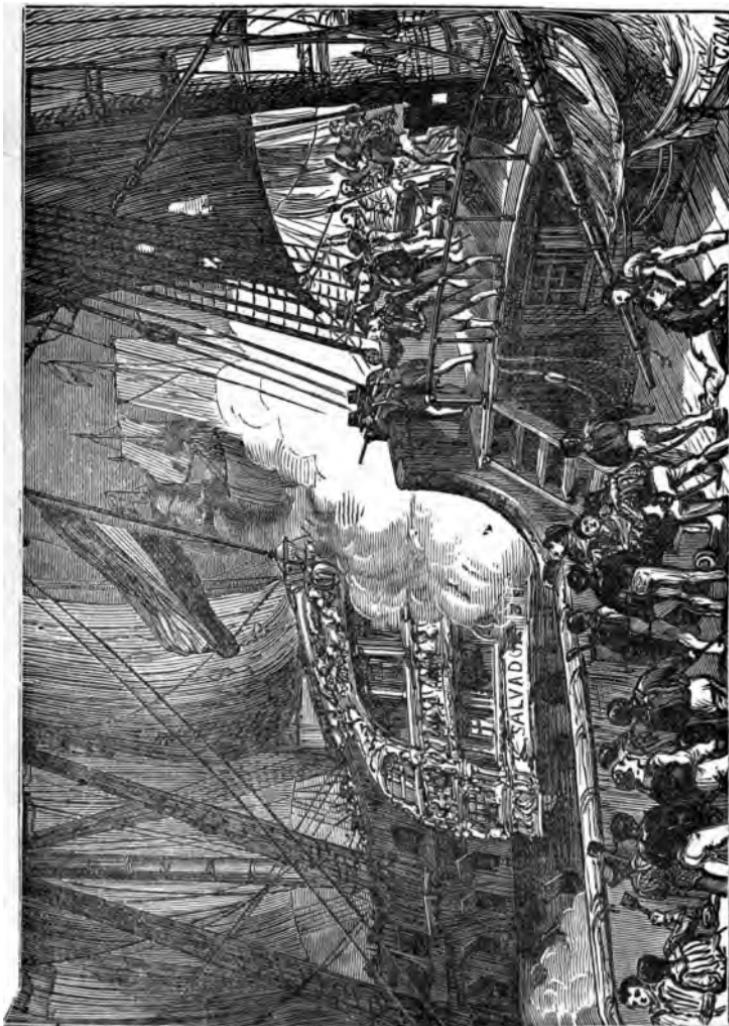
<sup>1</sup> He wrote to him as follows :—“ DEAR COLLINGWOOD,—‘A friend in need is a friend indeed.’

“ HORATIO NELSON.”

wards for the quarter-deck, where I found Captain Berry in possession of the poop, and the Spanish ensign hauling down. I passed with my people and Lieutenant Pearson, on the larboard gangway, to the forecastle, where I met two or three Spanish officers, prisoners to my seamen : they delivered me their swords. A fire of pistols, or muskets, opening from the admiral's stern gallery of the San-Josef, I directed the soldiers to fire into her stern ; and, calling to Captain Miller, ordered him to send more men into the San-Nicolas, and directed my people to board the first-rate, which was done in an instant, Captain Berry assisting me into the main-chains. At this moment, a Spanish officer looked over the quarter-deck rail, and said they surrendered. From this most welcome intelligence it was not long before I was on the quarter-deck, where the Spanish captain, with a bow, presented me his sword, and said the admiral was dying of his wounds. I asked him on his honour if the ship was surrendered. He declared she was : on which I gave him my hand, and desired him to call on his officers and ship's company ; which he did ; and, on the quarter-deck of a Spanish first-rate, extravagant as the story may seem, did I receive the swords of vanquished Spaniards, which, as I received, I gave to William Fearney, one of my bargemen, who put them, with the greatest *sang froid*, under his arm. I was surrounded by Captain Berry, Lieutenant Pearson of the 69th regiment, John Sykes, John Thompson, Francis Cooke—all old Agamemnons ; and several other brave men, seamen and soldiers. Thus fell these ships."

The battle off Cape St Vincent began about noon, and ceased at half-past three, when four Spanish line-of-battle ships had struck their colours, namely, the Salva-





BATTLE OF ST. VINCENT.

dor-del-Mundo, 112 guns ; the San-Josef, 112 ; the San-Nicolas, 80, and the San-Ysidro, 74. Among the captures was also the Santisma-Trinadad ; but, after striking to the Orion, she was towed out of fire, and eleven of Don Josef de Cordova's largest ships closed around her, and ensured her safety. Several of the Spanish vessels were severely damaged. Sir John Jervis thought it better to be content with the measure of success already achieved, however, than risk his battle-worn ships by re-engaging a force that was still largely superior to his own. At a quarter-past four he signalled for the frigates to take the prizes in tow ; and at five, for the fleet to form in close line ahead of the Victory.

The Spanish loss on board the four prizes amounted to 261 killed and 342 wounded. We may calculate that on board the whole fleet the loss was not less than 450 killed and 600 wounded. The British killed numbered 73, and the wounded 227 ; of which the greater proportion fell to the Culloden, the Captain, and the Excellent.

It was no small thing that an English fleet of fifteen sail of the line should boldly attack and defeat a Spanish fleet of twenty-seven ; and though the captures made were only four, the moral influence of such a victory, not only upon the British enemy, but also upon the mind of Europe, was very great. It confirmed our seamen in their confidence, in their habit of victory ; while it taught foreign navies more and more keenly to dread the English at sea ; to expect, as the certain result of such a meeting, a signal defeat. Therefore Sir John Jervis, with whom lay the merit of the bold resolution to engage so superior a force, well deserved his promotion to an earldom ; and Nelson,

who, by his intuitive perception, had thwarted the able manœuvre of the Spanish admiral, his reward of the Red Riband of the Bath. The victory off Cape St Vincent was no unworthy introduction to the greater victories of Copenhagen, the Nile, and Trafalgar.



XI.

*THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.*

A.D. 1798.



T is no part of the writer's intention in these pages to narrate at any length the great victories, won by British fleets, which have illustrated the naval history of the last two centuries.

I seek only to bring together some details in illustration of the courage, energy, and enterprise of British seamen. Yet of the battle of the Nile I feel compelled to speak, as never were those qualities more splendidly conspicuous than in that famous engagement. It was won by the pluck and steadfastness of our men and their officers, as surely as by the nautical skill and inspiring example of their heroic admiral.

“ An order is blown from ship to ship ;  
All round and round it rings ;  
And each sailor is stirred  
By the warlike word,  
And his jacket he downward flings.

“ What follows ?—a puff, and a flash of light,  
And the booming of a gun ;  
And a scream that shoots  
To the heart's red roots,  
And we know that a fight's begun.”

A large French fleet, under Admiral Brueys, escorted Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, in the early summer of 1797 ; and having covered the landing of the French army at Alexandria, lay at anchor in the Bay of Aboukir, in a position which was regarded as impregnable. The bay begins at a point about twenty miles to the north-east of Alexandria, and sweeps in a bold semi-circle from the castle of Aboukir to the Rosetta mouth of the Nile. Though the circuit is so considerable, the two horns of the crescent are not more than six miles apart. Line-of-battle ships cannot anchor within a league of the shore, owing to the presence of a great sandbank, on which the depth of water does not exceed twenty-four feet. A small island lies on the north-west side, about two miles from the castle-point, and connected with it by a chain of sandbanks and rocks ; it is almost the sole shelter the bay enjoys.

In this deep bay, but outside of the shoal we have spoken of, Admiral Brueys had drawn up his fleet in line of battle. Its flank was protected by the island, on which had been planted a battery of four twelve-pounders, some light guns, and a couple of mortars. The ships were moored in the following order :—Guerrier, 74 guns; Conquérant, 74; Spartiate, 74; Aquilon, 74; Peuple-Souverain, 74; Franklin, 80; L'Orient, 120; Tonnant, 80; Heureux, 74; Mercure, 74; Guillaume-Tell, 80; Généreux, 74; and Timoléon, 74. Between this array and the sandbank lay the frigates Sérieuse, 36; Artémise, 36; and Diane, 40. A couple of gunbrigs, seven gunboats, and three fireships, completed the French armament. In the Orient flew the flag of Vice-Admiral Brueys, who had as his seconds Captain Honoré Ganteaume, and

Commodore Casa-Bianca ; the Franklin carried that of Rear-Admiral Blanquet ; and the Guillaume-Tell, that of Rear-Admiral Villeneuve. In all, the fleet was armed with 1196 guns, and carried 11,820 men. Brueys regarded its position as unassailable ; and to most commanders it would have seemed so. But when Nelson came in sight of it, he instantly resolved on attack. " Before this time to-morrow," he exclaimed, " I shall have gained a peerage, or Westminster Abbey." The same spirit ran through all his men. Their hearts caught fire from his heart ; and if their ambition did not aspire to a peerage, their eyes twinkled as they thought of prize-money.

In the " Maid of Sker," Mr Blackmore makes one of his characters say :—

" I shall never forget how beautiful those ships looked, and how peaceful. A French ship always sits on the water with an elegant quickness, like a French woman at the looking-glass. And though we brought the waving breeze in with us very briskly, there was hardly swell enough in the bay to make them play their hawsers. Many fine things have I seen, but it was worth any man's while to live to the age of threescore years and eight, with a sound mind in a sound body, and eyes than almost as good as ever, if there were nothing for it more to see what I saw at this moment. Six-and-twenty ships of the line, thirteen bearing the tricolor, and circling, cleared for action. The other thirteen, with the Red Cross flying, the Cross of St George on the gunnel of white, and tossing the blue water from their sterns under pressure of canvas. Onward rushed our British ships, as if every one of them was alive, and driven out of all patience by the wicked escapes of the enemy. And now,

at last, we had got them tight, and mean we did to keep them."

Nelson's fleet consisted of the Vanguard, 74, which carried his flag ; Minotaur, 74 ; Leander, 50 ; Audacious, 74 ; Defence, 74 ; Zealous, 74 ; Orion, 74 ; Goliath, 74 ; Majestic, 74 ; Bellerophon, 74 ; Culloden, 74 ; Theseus, 74 ; Alexander, 74 ; Swiftsure, 74. In all, 1012 guns, and 8068 men.

When the British sailed into Aboukir Bay, the French ships were lying at single anchor, without springs on their cables, and each had sent a detachment ashore for fresh water. Brueys immediately recalled these detachments ; and further to strengthen his fighting-force, drew some men from his frigates. He then signalled to prepare for action ; but observing that the British fleet hove-to, he concluded that Nelson would not attack until the following morning, and signalled to remain at anchor, hoping, under cover of the night, to obey Napoleon's instructions, and steal out to sea.

Nelson, however, was resolute to fight the French ; and at half-past five he brought up his ships abreast of the extremity of the Aboukir shoal. He had conceived the bold idea, or adopted it when suggested by Captain Foley, of passing between the shoal and the French fleet, and attacking the latter on its unprepared side. Having signalled his ships to form in line of battle ahead and astern of the flagship, he hailed the Zealous to know if Captain Hood thought there was depth of water sufficient between the enemy and the sandbank. "I don't know, sir," answered Hood ; "but, with your permission, I will stand in and try."

The Zealous, taking repeated soundings, carefully

cleared the shoal, with the Goliath slightly ahead on her larboard bow. The remainder of the fleet followed in order :—Orion, Audacious, Theseus, Vanguard, Minotaur, Defence, Bellerophon, Majestic, and Leander. The Culloden was at some distance to the northward ; while to the west, beating up under all sail to join the fleet, were the Alexander and Swiftsure, with colours hoisted, and the Union Jack waving from their riggings. The British ships went slowly into action.

At twenty minutes past six, the French ships hoisted the tricolor, and the Conquérant and the Guerrier opened the deadly combat by a distant cannonade at the slowly advancing Goliath and Zealous. Two minutes more, and the Goliath (Captain Foley), ranging ahead of the Guerrier, which she saluted in passing with a tremendous broadside, bore up for that vessel's mainbow ; but her anchor not dropping soon enough, she drove on until abreast of the larboard quarter of the second of the French line, the Conquérant. The Zealous (Captain Hood) then fell into the place, on the larboard or mainbow of the Guerrier, which Foley had intended for his own ship. These four vessels were speedily at work, while the mortar in the island contributed to the hurly-burly. The broadside of the Zealous brought down the Guerrier's foremast ; an omen of good fortune which was hailed by three hearty cheers from the whole British fleet.

The third ship in the British line was aptly named the Orion (Captain Sir James Saumarez), after the hero of the old mythology,

“Orion, hunter of the beast.”

Running past the Zealous and the Goliath, she made for

the front of the Frenchman, the Aquilon ; but as she bore down, the Sérieuse frigate ventured to open fire upon her. This bold challenge was at once taken up, and the Orion responded with her starboard guns, dismasting the venturesome frigate, and shattering her hull so terribly that, drifting back upon the shoal, she filled and partially went down. Eventually the man-of-war brought up her head to wind, and poured her fire on one side into the Peuple-Souverain, and on the other into the bows of the Franklin.

The Audacious, impatient to share in the *mêlée*, slipped in between the Guerrier and Conquérant, saluted the bows of the latter with her larboard broadside, and then, swinging round, took up a position within fifty yards of the French ship's larboard side. The Theseus forged ahead, and selected the Spartiate for her antagonist. Nelson's own ship, the Vanguard, following out his design of overwhelming the French van before he engaged their rear, edged away towards the outer side of the enemy's line, and receiving their fire as she passed, dropped her anchor within half pistol shot of the Spartiate. In like manner, the Minotaur (Captain Jervis) grappled with the Aquilon ; while the Defence (Captain Peyton) engaged the Peuple-Souverain.

It was now about seven o'clock, and the fires of the fierce Egyptian sun were fast sinking below the yellow rim of the far-off desert. A part of each fleet was hotly engaged ; and the thunder of their guns rolled with a monotonous roar through the echoing streets of Alexandria. Nowhere did the fight rage more furiously than round the English admiral, whose ship was exposed to the ceaseless shot and shell of both the Spartiate and the

Aquilon. In the course of a few minutes she had between fifty and sixty men killed and wounded ; and even Nelson must have rejoiced when the Minotaur came up, and took off the fire of the Aquilon.

With chivalrous courage, Captain Darby laid his vessel alongside the great French three-decker, the Orient ; while the Majestic (Captain Westcott) attached an 80-gun ship, the Tonnant.

Meanwhile, in her ardour to plunge into the dreadful fray, the Culloden (Captain Troubridge), ran upon the Aboukir shoal ; and neither the efforts of her crew and commander, nor the assistance of the Leander, could get her off. Her signals, however, saved the Swiftsure and the Alexander from a similar mishap. The former, at about half-past eight, came grandly into action ; and Captain Hallowell directed her guns, within a range of two hundred yards, at the French flagship. On the larboard side of the latter, the Alexander (Captain Ball) took up her station while the 50-gun ship, the Leander (Captain Thompson), brought up under the larboard bow of the Franklin, which her guns, coolly and skilfully handled, annoyed considerably.

I have thus accounted for all the British ships. Before nine o'clock, all, save the unlucky Culloden, were pounding away at the enemy, each endeavouring to surpass the other in activity and perseverance. They fought under the eye of Nelson, and that was enough ; for it was his peculiar fortune to inspire his followers with the same glow of enthusiasm that kindled in his own breast, to animate them with the same confidence and certainty of success. The French behaved with a gallantry that recalled their most glorious days of battle ;

but against Nelson and Nelson's men it was impossible for them to prevail, and their superiority of force had been neutralised by the English admiral's masterly tactics.

Still raged the battle,—the darkness of the night being relieved by the flaming guns of the hostile fleets. When the smoke-clouds swept away, the British ships could be recognised by their lights, which they had hoisted at a signal from the admiral. Victory was with the British from the beginning ; three ships of the enemy were dismasted in the first hour's fighting ; and, by half-past eight, two, the Aquilon and the Peuple-Souverain, had surrendered. The Spartiate was taken possession of immediately afterwards.

Shortly before this event, Nelson, while standing on the quarter-deck of the Vanguard, received a severe wound in the forehead from a langridge shot, or small bar of iron, and was only saved from falling by Captain Berry, who caught him in his arms. From the great effusion of blood, those around him feared the wound was mortal, and such was the hero's own impression. A large flap of the skin of the forehead, cut from the bone, had fallen over one eye ; and the other being blind, he was in total darkness. Being carried below to the cockpit, which was filled with wounded, the surgeon hastened to attend to him. “No,” said the admiral, “I will take my turn with my brave followers !”

As the agony of his wound increased, he yielded to an old presentiment, that he should die in battle, and began to prepare for death. He desired his chaplain to bear his last farewell to Lady Nelson, and signed a commission, appointing his friend, the gallant Hardy, to the rank of

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post-captain in the Vanguard. Soon afterwards, he instructed his first-lieutenant, Mr Capel, to go on board the Minotaur, and bring Captain Louis to his side. He could not rest, he said, until he had thanked him for his gallant assistance. "This," he added, "is the hundred and twenty-fourth time that I have been engaged, but I believe it is now nearly over with me." When Captain Louis came on board, and expressed the profound regret with which he saw the condition of his chief, Nelson exclaimed, "Farewell, dear Louis. I shall never forget the obligation I am under for your brave and generous conduct; and now, whatever may become of me, my mind is at peace." By this time, however, the surgeon arrived, and proceeded to examine the wound. During the examination, the most anxious silence prevailed; and (as Southeby says) the joy of the wounded men, and of the whole crew, when they heard that the hurt was merely superficial, gave Nelson deeper pleasure than the unexpected assurance that his life was in no danger. The surgeon entreated, and indeed ordered, him to remain quiet; but to Nelson rest was impossible. He called for his secretary to draw up his despatches. Mr Campbell had himself been wounded, and was so grieved by the blind and suffering state of his admiral, that he was unable to write. The chaplain was then summoned; but, before he came, Nelson, with characteristic eagerness, seized the pen, and contrived to trace a few words, marking "his devout sense of the success which had already been obtained."

As the *Swiftsure* sailed into the thick of the battle, her way luridly lighted up by the flashes of the guns, she fell in with a dismasted ship, which was slowly dragging its shot-torn hull out of fire. She was about to cannonade

her, when it occurred to Captain Hallowell to hail, and ask what vessel she was. “Bellerophon going out of action disabled,” was the reply. The *Swiftsure* immediately let go her anchor, and dropping into the place just quitted by the *Bellerophon*, directed her broadside against an enemy’s ship, which afterwards proved to be the *Tonnant*. The *Bellerophon* had maintained the contest against the large French flagship as long as she was able. Her crew plied their guns with unfailing vigour; but the duel was too unequal. At about half-past seven she lost her mizzen-mast, and her mainmast went a few minutes later. The *Orient* had also set her on fire, but her crew nimbly extinguished the flames. The superiority of the enemy, however, could not be withstood; and in about three-quarters of an hour, the *Bellerophon*, setting her spritsail, and cutting her stern cable, ran out of action, having lost 49 men killed and 148 wounded. As she ranged ahead, her shattered foremast fell, and in this condition she was met, as we have seen, by the *Swiftsure*.

The *Orient*, however, was not to escape. The *Leander* harassed her with occasional shot; and the *Swiftsure*, about half-past eight, opened upon her with her larboard guns. The *Alexander*, on coming into the fray, took up a position to rake her with her starboard broadside. A few minutes after nine the people of the *Swiftsure* perceived a fire in the mizzen-chains of the great flagship, and directed their guns towards the spot with tremendous effect. The flames swiftly glided along the deck, and up the masts, and wreathed the yards and rigging; throwing a dreadful lurid light upon the clouds of battle, and defining the spars and outlines of the contending vessels with startling distinctness. At about ten o’clock, the fire reached

the magazines ; and the stately three-decker blew up with an awful crash, which shook the neighbouring men-of-war from stem to stern, and filled the air with burning beams and pieces of flaming timber. “The whole sky was blotched with the corpses of men, like the stones of a crater cast upward ; and the sheet of the fire behind them showed their knees, and their bellies, and streaming hair. Then with a hiss, like electric hail, from a mile’s height, all came down again ; corpses first, and timbers next, and then the great spars that had streaked the sky like rockets.”

The dreadful catastrophe was followed by a pause in the battle ; the boldest held their breath for a time. Not a gun was fired on either side for full ten minutes. Then the British resumed the attack, the Defence and Swiftsure silencing the guns of the Franklin, bringing down her masts, and compelling her to surrender. It was early morning when the French frigate *Artimése* hauled down her colours ; she had caught fire, and soon afterwards blew up. The *Heureux* and the *Mercure* also surrendered. The *Timoleon* was set on fire by her own crew ; and on the morning of the 3d, the British took possession of the *Tonnant*. So that of all the splendid fleet which had shown so gallant an array in the Bay of Aboukir, only two line-of-battle ships, the *Généreux* and *Guillaume Tell*, and two frigates, the *Justice* and the *Diane*, effected their escape. Well might the English admiral issue the following notification to his captains :—

“ VANGUARD, off the mouth of the Nile,  
2d August, 1798.

“ Almighty God having blessed His Majesty’s arms with victory, the admirals intends returning public thanksgiving for the same at two o’clock this day, and he recommends every ship doing the same as soon as convenient.”

We need hardly say that the recommendation was duly acted upon.

The British loss in this hard-fought battle was in proportion to its results. The Goliath had 21 killed and 46 wounded; the Majestic, 50 killed and 143 wounded; the Zealous, 1 killed, 7 wounded; the Audacious, 1 killed, 35 wounded; the Orion, 13 killed, 29 wounded; the Theseus, 5 killed, 30 wounded; the Vanguard, 30 killed, 76 wounded; the Minotaur, 23 killed, 64 wounded; the Defence, 4 killed, 11 wounded; the Bellerophon, 49 killed, 148 wounded; the Swiftsure, 7 killed, 22 wounded; the Alexander, 14 killed, 58 wounded; and the Leander, 14 wounded. In all, 218 killed and 678 wounded.

The French loss, in killed and wounded, must have exceeded 2500. Amongst the killed was the French commander-in-chief, Vice-Admiral Brueys, who, about two P.M., received a shot that cut him almost in two. He refused to be taken below, exclaiming in a steadfast voice,—“Un amiral français doit mourir sur son banc de quart.” He survived the wound only some twelve or fifteen minutes. In the explosion of the Orient perished Commodore Casa-Bianca and his son, a lad of only ten years of age. According to the story immortalised by Mrs Hemans, he refused to quit his post, even when the flames of the burning ship enveloped him, because he had not received his father’s permission:—

“ The boy stood on the burning deck,  
Whence all but he had fled ;  
The flame that lit the battle’s wreck  
Shone round him o’er the dead.



“ The flames rolled on—he would not go  
Without his father’s word;  
That father, faint in death below,  
His voice no longer heard.

“ There came a burst of thunder sound,  
The boy—ah ! where was he ?  
Ask of the winds, that far around  
With fragments strewed the sea !

“ With mast and helm, and pennon fair,  
That well had bore their part,  
But the noblest thing that perished there,  
Was that young and faithful heart.”

It seems a pity to spoil so sweet and touching a romance ; but authentic evidence proves that, at the time of the explosion, the elder Casa-Bianca was below, having his wound dressed, and that his son was in attendance upon him.

I conclude this brief narrative of the battle of the Nile with Coleridge’s description of the engagement between Captain Ball’s ship, the *Alexander*, and the *Orient* :—

“ It was already dark when Captain Ball brought his ship into action and laid her alongside the *Orient*.

“ We had previously made a combustible preparation, which, from the nature of the engagement to be expected, he had proposed to reserve for the last emergency ; but just at the time, when, from several symptoms, he had every reason to believe the enemy would soon strike him, one of the lieutenants, without his knowledge, threw in the combustible matter, and this it was that occasioned the tremendous explosion of that vessel, which, with the deep silence and interruption of the engagement that succeeded to it, has been fitly deemed the sublimest war incident recorded in history. . . .

“At the renewal of the battle, Captain Ball, though his ship was then on fire in three different places, laid her alongside a French eighty-four, and a second long obstinate contest began. The firing on the part of the French ship having at length, and for some time, slackened, and then altogether ceased, and yet no sign being given of surrender, the senior-lieutenant of the Alexander came to Captain Ball and informed him that the hearts of his men were as good as ever, but that they were so completely exhausted that they were scarcely capable of lifting an arm. He asked, therefore, that as the enemy had ceased firing, the men might be permitted to lie down by their guns for a short time. After some reflection, Captain Ball acceded to the proposal, taking, of course, the proper precaution to rouse them again at the moment he thought requisite.

“Accordingly, with the exception of himself, his officers, and the appointed watch, the ship’s crew lay down, each in the place at which he was stationed, and slept there twenty minutes.

“They were then roused, and started up,” as Captain Ball expresses it, “more like men out of an ambush than from sleep, so co-instantaneously did they all obey the summons. They recommenced their fire, and in a few minutes the enemy surrendered; it was soon after discovered that, during the interval, and almost immediately after the French ships had first ceased firing, her crew had sunk down by their guns and there slept, almost by the side, as it were, of their sleeping enemies.”

Such was the battle of the Nile.

## XII.

### *HOW THE DROITS-DE-L'HOMME PERISHED.*

A.D. 1797.



E are about to relate one of the most stirring and remarkable incidents which occurred during our war with Revolutionary France.

A French expedition to Ireland in December, 1796, had been completely baffled by the activity of a small British squadron, under Captain Sir Edward Pellew, and the outbreak of a tremendous gale, which shattered the ships, and drove some ashore. In a crippled condition, and foiled in their object of effecting a descent at Bantry Bay, the French quitted the Irish coast, and steered towards that of France. The *Droits-de-l'Homme*, a noble ship-of-war, carrying 74 guns, having lost sight of her consorts, bent her course towards Belle Isle ; and, on the 13th of January, had approached, in the belief of her commander, Commodore la Crosse, within about 25 leagues of the French shore, in the latitude of Penmarck Point. A thick fog arising, the French captain resolved to keep off the land, and stood to the southward under easy sail.

About an hour after noon, the look-out man descried through the mists the outlines of a large ship to windward, apparently in chase of the *Droits-de-l'Homme*. In a few minutes a second ship was seen astern of the first. The French came to the conclusion that they were English vessels, though in truth they belonged to their own fleet, and accordingly crowded on all sail to escape. The wind at this time was blowing very strongly from the westward, and a heavy sea was running. At half-past three, the unfortunate Frenchmen discovered two more ships on the lee bow, which seemed to be manoeuvring with the view of cutting them off from the land. There was no mistake about *their* nationality! They were the British frigates, *Indefatigable*, 44 guns, and *Amazon*, 36 guns, commanded by Sir Edward Pellew and Captain R. C. Reynolds respectively. Swift was the chase, and speedy the flight! The French ship, in pressing forward with as much sail set as she could dare to carry, carried away her fore and maintop masts; but fearing the British might take advantage of the circumstance to attack on her leeside, her crew made all haste to clear away the wreck. This was done in about twenty minutes, and the *Droits-de-l'Homme*, under her courses and mizzen topsail, bowled along at the rate of five knots an hour.

The British frigates, however, were making seven knots, and the *Indefatigable*, which was seven or eight miles ahead of her consort, arrived at about half-past five within hail of the French man-of-war. Hauling up, she hurled a broadside at her antagonist, which was promptly returned, accompanied by a heavy volley of musketry. Pellew then made an effort to pass head, in order to

rake the Frenchman in that direction, but the *Droits-de-l'Homme* skilfully foiled the manœuvre, while she attempted to run the frigate down. In this she in her turn was baffled ; and a broadside which she poured into the stern of the *Indefatigable* did but little mischief, owing to the heavy rolling of the ships, and the consequent uselessness of her lower battery.

For an hour and a quarter the fight continued. Both ships were well handled, and maintained a steady fire ; but Pellew must have been glad when the *Amazon* came up, under a press of canvas, to equalize the combat. Within pistol-shot distance she hurled a crashing broadside into the French ship's quarter. She then sought to press astern of the big two-decker ; but the latter defeated the manœuvre, as she had done in the case of the *Indefatigable*, and contrived to keep both her assailants on one side. For nearly another hour the three vessels kept up a vigorous cannonade, and the roaring guns seemed to deaden the voices of the gale. At half-past seven, the British vessels shot ahead ; the *Indefatigable* to repair her shattered rigging, and the *Amazon* carried forward by her swelling canvas. The brief pause that followed was turned to account by the French in restoring order on board, and cutting away their broken spars, while they continued to run to the east-south-east in the midst of the gathering fog and darkness.

An hour had elapsed, and the British frigates were ready to renew the action. Pinning their adversary between them, like a bull between a couple of sleuth-hounds, they smote her on each bow with a raking fire, which covered her decks with killed and wounded. She,

to profit by the numerical superiority of her crew, made desperate efforts to board her two opponents, who, however, sheered off as soon as she endeavoured to approach them, going now to port and now to starboard, according as circumstances required. Thus the fray continued : evening deepened into night ; the wind blew with violent squalls, and drove the waters before it in furious billows : still the frigates persistently clung to their formidable antagonist. The *Droits-de-l'Homme* lost her mizzen-mast, and, having used up all her round shot but fifty, began to fire shells. Soon afterwards the frigates drew off to refit their wounded masts, and the weary French obtained a brief interval of rest. On both sides the action recommenced with increased fury, and was slowly maintained until, at about half-past four, the look-out man on each ship uttered the warning cry of "land on the lee bow!" The British frigates immediately hauled off, and crowded on all sail to get out to sea. The *Droits-de-l'Homme* made an effort to follow their example ; with what ill success we shall presently see.

The engagement, thus strangely terminated, had lasted, with the exception of two short intermissions, for fully ten hours and a half, or, according to the French account, thirteen hours. During the whole time "the sea ran so high, that the people on the main decks of the frigates were up to their middles in water. So violent, too, was the motion of the ships, that some of the *Indefatigable*'s guns broke their breechings four times ; some drew their ring bolts from the side, and many of the guns, owing to the water having beaten into them, were obliged to be drawn immediately after loading. A scene nearly similar was acting on board the *Amazon* ; and

when the firing ceased, the crews of both ships, notwithstanding the increased demand for their exertions, owing to the new perils that assailed them, were almost worn out with fatigue."

The masts of the Indefatigable were crippled with shot, and she had four feet water in her hold. The Amazon had three feet water, and had lost her maintop-mast and maintopsail-yard, while her fore and main masts and yards were seriously damaged. Fortunately the loss of life was not in proportion. The Indefatigable had but nine killed, and the Amazon only three; while the former had no more than eighteen wounded, the latter twelve. The French fire was evidently aimed too high; the heavy seas, however, as already stated, prevented the lower battery from being brought into action.

The Droits-de-l'Homme had on board 900 soldiers in addition to her usual crew of 700 men. Her loss was very severe: three army officers and 100 sailors and soldiers killed; and several officers of the ship, seven army officers, and 100 sailors and soldiers wounded.

To resume our narrative:—It was about half-past four, when, by the light of a brilliant moon, one of the Indefatigable's officers, stationed on her forecastle, caught sight of land at a distance of two miles. The white line of breakers was soon distinct enough to every eye, and the extent of the peril being instantly recognised, men and officers exerted themselves with wonderful energy to extricate their vessel. Hauling on board the tacks, they wore round, and made sail for the southward. Just before day, breakers were again seen on the lee bow, and the ship wore to the southward. When the dull January

morning dawned on the scene, it was found that ahead, and on the weather-bow, and to the leeward, loomed the surf-beaten shore, and the Indefatigable once more steered to the southward. At this time the hapless *Droits-de-l'Homme* was visible in the direction of the land, with broadside uppermost, and foam-crested waves beating against her straining hull. The Indefatigable, as she endeavoured to escape from Audierne Bay, for the situation was now recognised, passed within a mile of the wreck, but, as the wind blew inshore, could render no assistance. Her crew and officers had to take anxious thought for their own safety, and Sir Edward Pellew doubtless drew a long breath of relief, when she weathered the perilous rocks of the Penmarcks and stood out into the open.

Meanwhile the *Amazon*, on observing her consort's danger-signal, wore to the southward; but owing to her crippled condition, she did not tack with sufficient readiness, and in about half-an-hour she struck the ground. All on board, except six men who got into the water and were drowned, saved themselves by making rafts. On reaching the shore, however, they were immediately made prisoners by a party of French soldiers, and conveyed, first to Audierne, afterwards to Duarnez, and finally to Quimper.

The fate of the *Droits-de-l'Homme* was very melancholy. Her look-out men seem to have discovered their dangerous proximity to the land about the same time as the Indefatigable; and her course was immediately altered. But the fall of her foremast and bowsprit necessarily checked her progress. The commander resolved

to bring up ; but all his cables had been shot away, and some time was spent in bending a stout hawser to one of the only two anchors which had not been lost in Bantry Bay. The mainsail, meanwhile, was blown from the yard, and the ship almost ceased to move. The anchor was dropped in twelve fathoms, but would not hold ; and about seven o'clock the unfortunate vessel struck on a sandbank opposite to the little town of Plouzenee. At the second shot her mainmast snapped like a reed, signals of distress were immediately made, and, to lighten the ship and keep her upright, several of the guns were pitched into the sea.

On board the *Droits-de-l'Homme* were some English prisoners, who, during the battle, had been confined to the cable-tier. Hearing a loud cry of many voices, “*Pauvres Anglais ! pauvres Anglais ! montez bien vite, nous commes tous perdus !*” they rushed upon deck, to see before them a scene of almost unexampled horror. The scuppers ran with blood ; the dead and dying were lying thickly around ; the groans of the wounded rose above the shrill agony of the blast, and mingled with the moan of the foaming breakers, which raged around and against the dismasted and shot-torn hulk. The *Indefatigable* could be made out in the distance, rolling and tossing as she drove in the direction of the surf-beaten Penmarcks ; while on the larboard side, and near at hand, the *Amazon* lay aground. The air rung with shrieks of terror, anguish, and dismay ; and to all these circumstances of dread must be added the wintry gloom of a January morning, resting like a pall on the wide waste of wind-driven waters.

As the daylight dawned, the sufferers on the wreck

could see that the shore was lined with people, who, however, had no means of affording succour. The billows rolled incessantly over the shattered vessel, and swept off many of the wounded. When the tide went down, some of the boats were launched; but the first two, before any person could embark in them, were carried away by the billows, and tossed in fragments among the breakers. Spare yards were then lashed together, so as to form a rough-and-ready kind of raft. To this was attached a rope, which was gradually slackened from the ship, so that the raft might drift on shore; but the waves sweeping off some of the men who had ventured upon it, the others cut away the rope, and were driven against the rocks. A second raft was constructed, but met with no better fortune. A gallant fellow then offered to swim on shore, with a cord to which a suitable rope might afterwards be fastened; but after stoutly buffeting the waters for several hundred yards, he became exhausted with fatigue, and had to be hauled on board again.

In these fruitless efforts the whole day had been spent. Night came on; and the waves still beat pitilessly upon the straining, rending, and creaking wreck. The people on board had been thirty hours without food, for the hold was filled with water; and their sufferings were extreme. At low water, on the second day, the 15th, an English captain and eight Englishmen lowered a small boat, in which, after great exertions, they succeeded in reaching the shore. Encouraged by this deed of daring; many of the Frenchmen ventured out upon rafts; but in each case destruction was the quick result. Then came night, with all its miseries; and perhaps it was as well

that the mist of darkness should conceal the agony for which there was no alleviation. A third day dawned, the 16th. Larger rafts were constructed, but not, so far as we can discover, to meet with any better fortune. The largest boat was launched, in order that an effort might be made to save the wounded and helpless, including two women and six children. Unhappily, the bonds of discipline had snapped under the pressure of so much misery ; a rush was made to the boat, and in spite of the exertions and remonstrances of their officers, upwards of a hundred men threw themselves into it. The boat sank ; and a tremendous wave engulfed the bodies of the victims.

By the fourth night nearly 900 men had perished. But the survivors were almost more to be pitied than those whose sufferings had been cut short by death. "Weak, distracted, and wanting everything," says Lieutenant Pipon, as quoted by Mr James, "we envied their fate. . . . The sense of hunger was already lost, but a parching thirst consumed us. Recourse was had to wine and salt water, which did but increase the want. Half a hogshead of vinegar floated up, and each had half a wine-glassful. This gave a momentary relief, yet soon left us again in the same state of dreadful thirst. Almost at the last gasp, every one was dying with misery. . . . The fourth day, the 17th, brought with it a more serene sky, and the sea seemed to subside ; but to behold, from fore and aft, the dying in all directions, was a sight too shocking for the fretting mind to endure. Almost lost to a sense of humanity, we no longer looked with pity on those who were the speedy forerunners of our own fate, and a consultation took place to sacrifice some one as food

for the remainder. The die was about to be cast, when the welcome sight of a man-of-war brig renewed our hopes. Their situation was discovered, and the brig promptly sent her boats to their relief. About 150 were saved that evening, but 380 were left to endure the horrors of another night. Next morning not more than half survived." The number of victims by this dreadful catastrophe must have exceeded one thousand, in addition to those who perished in the engagement with the *Indefatigable* and the *Amazon*.



### XIII.

#### *THE SIBYLLE AND THE FOX:*

#### *AND WHAT THEY DID AT THE PHILIPPINES.*

A.D. 1798.

T was on the 5th of January, 1798, that the Sibylle, a 38-gun frigate, commanded by Captain Edward Cooke, and the Fox, a small 32-gun frigate, commanded by Captain Pulteney Malcolm, sailed from the roadstead of Macao, bent on "deeds of high emprise" against the Spaniards of the Philippine Islands. Their special object was, if possible, to surprise and capture two richly-laden "argosies," which were believed to be nearly ready to depart from Manilla, the chief town of the Philippines, on the homeward voyage to Spain.

The two frigates were off the island of Luzon on the 12th; and, next day, while running along its verdant shores with French colours flying,—Spain and France were then allied against Great Britain,—captured a small bark from the port towards which they were bending their course. After relieving her of some 3000 silver dollars, and hearing from her unfortunate master that at Cavita, the port or harbour of Manilla, lay a Spanish squadron of four sail-of-the-line and four frigates, but with only one ship of each class ready for service, the coaster was sent

about her business, and the English vessels “flung all their canvas to the wind.” As they were intended to pass for French ships of war, they were properly disguised in their trim, and suitable alterations made in their appearance. All is fair, we presume, in love and war!

Early on the morning of the 13th, the two frigates sailed into the beautiful bay of Manilla, glided by the signal-station undetected, and about an hour before noon dropped anchor in fourteen fathoms of water. Their topsails were kept ready bent at their mastheads, in case a hasty departure should be found advisable. Next day, at dawn, they weighed anchor, and with French colours gaily flying, began working up the bay. Soon after sunrise, they were able to make out the Spanish force, consisting of three (not four) sail-of-the-line and three frigates; four being mastless, and the others having stopped only their lower masts. Two hours later, and they were lying nearly becalmed at a distance of three miles from busy and populous Manilla, the roofs and towers of which shone picturesquely in the golden tropical light. At this juncture, a Spanish guard-boat, with a crew of fifteen officers and men, including the second captain of one of the dismasted frigates, boarded the Fox, to offer the usual compliments and make the usual inquiries. The pilot of the Fox, a Mr Bernard, spoke French and Spanish fluently; and he hastened to inform the Spaniards that the two frigates belonged to a French squadron; that they had been cruising for some months off the Chinese coast; and that, the crews being sickly, they had put into Manilla for refreshment, and to effect a junction with the Spanish armament, part of which, it was politely hoped, would accompany them to sea. In reply, the

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Spaniard, with great courtesy, informed them that, in accordance with the governor's directions, all their wants would be readily supplied ; but he regretted that, owing to various adverse circumstances, none of the war-ships in port could be got ready for sea in less than two months.

Captain Cooke, having come on board, was ceremoniously introduced by Captain Malcolm as Commodore Latour, and proceeded to assume the character of a French officer, well-known in Eastern Seas by that name, who had been dead for some months. A man of many accomplishments, who had seen a good deal of service on the coast of France, the *soi-disant* commodore carried on the little comedy with great success. The questions put by the Spanish officer were answered with edifying readiness. The conversation lasted for nearly an hour, and the climax of the farce was reached when everybody joined in drinking success to the united efforts of France and Spain against England—a part of the entertainment which, we think, British officers should, even as a stratagem, have avoided. The deception might have stopped short of this extreme. However this may be, when Captains Cooke and Malcolm had obtained all the information they wanted from their “unsuspecting guest,” they revealed their identity. The Spanish captain almost fainted from astonishment and chagrin ; but “a bumper of Madeira” restored his spirits, and he was consoled with the promise that he should not be detained as a prisoner.

Meanwhile, a couple of boats from the shore pulled alongside. One proved to be Admiral Don Martin Alaba's barge, rowing twenty oars, with twenty-three

officers and men, including the Governor of Manilla's nephew ; the other was a felucca, rowing twenty oars also, with the same complement of officers and men, and carrying one of Admiral Alaba's aides-de-camp. The latter was charged to convey the governor's congratulations at the arrival of their friends the French, and his assurance that all they might want or desire would be immediately furnished. Further, that launches, with cables and anchors to assist in warping the frigates into the harbour, would soon be ready.

As nothing could be gained by prolonging the deception, "the new arrivals," on joining their friends in the Fox's cabin, were made acquainted with it. They received the unwelcome intelligence with Spanish gravity, but could not wholly conceal their chagrin, which was greatly increased on their observing soon afterwards the important consequences of the little drama in which they were unwilling actors. No doubt the occasion taught them a lesson, and that for the rest of their lives they trusted less readily to appearances ! The Spanish boats' crews, while their officers were being enlightened in the cabin, had been politely transferred to the deck below, and relieved of their uniform, which a party of British seamen briskly assumed, and, thus disguised, pushed off in the barge and felucca, along with some of the frigates' boats, towards the Spanish gunboats that lay at anchor in the stream. Completely taken by surprise, the crews of the gunboats offered no resistance, and surrendered without firing a shot. One boat with thirty oars carried a long brass 30-pounder and four swivels, and a crew of 52 men ; the second rowed twenty-eight, and the third thirty oars, each mounting one long 24-pounder and four

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swivels, with a complement of fifty men. As some of the crew were on shore, and others contrived to effect their escape, the total number of prisoners did not exceed 118 officers and men.

The proceedings on board the gunboats were seen from the shore, and naturally so mystified the Spanish authorities that they despatched a felucca rigged boat, rowing eighteen oars, with a crew of 21 officers and men, to inquire into their purport; and the captain of the port was instructed to demand the immediate restoration of the boats, or the two frigates would be considered as enemies, and, in spite of the French flag, treated accordingly. Before replying to this message, the British captain handed the Spanish officer and his crew below. Hitherto the weather had remained perfectly calm, and this circumstance had accounted for the frigates lying outside the harbour; but a breeze now sprung up, which rendered discovery unavoidable, and prevented Cooke and Malcolm from carrying on their stratagem.

From the Spanish officers who had successively come on board, much information was extracted. It appeared that the war-vessels in port consisted of three 74-gun ships and one 34-gun frigate; that they were under equipment at the arsenal, but, as already stated, were not fit to put to sea. There were also several gunboats quite new, copper-bottomed, and excellently appointed. As to the two treasure-ships, the special object of the quest of the English frigates, they were both lying in the Cavita, but one was aground; and the other, on the appearance, a few days before, of an English man-of-war, had hastily relanded her rich cargo.

At four o'clock P.M., Captain Malcolm sumptuously

entertained the Spanish officers at dinner; while their men were "regaled" with an ample meal of fresh China beef and good English grog. They were then sent ashore in the guardboat, barge, and two feluccas; their satisfaction at the courteous treatment they had received, and their pleasure at regaining their liberty, fully prevailing over the feeling of annoyance they had experienced at becoming the dupes of the English captains' extravaganza. It is clear that if the *Sibylle* and *Fox* had been accompanied by two or three ships of war, the town and arsenal, from their state of unpreparedness, could easily have been captured, and the Spanish vessels destroyed. The farce, however, had not been played for nothing. The actors had to congratulate themselves, if not on an admiring audience, or a demand for a second performance, on substantial "receipts;" to wit, 7 boats, 3 great guns, 12 swivels, 27 muskets, 32 cutlasses, 18 half pikes, 13 pistols, 153 round shot, 137 grape shot, and 100 shells, besides gunpowder and musket-cartridges.

In the evening, the British frigates, with the three gun-boats in charge of Lieutenants Kennedy, Elphinstone, and Rutherford, dropped down below the signal-station, and on the following morning they quitted the bay. With all their canvas set, and the gunboats in tow, they stood away to the southward, in the hope of anticipating the diffusion of the intelligence of their arrival. On the night of the 19th, they experienced a severe gale, in which one of the gunboats towed by the *Fox* broke adrift, and foundered, with the loss of all her crew. For the next two or three days they sailed pleasantly along the pleasant shores of the fine green islands of Mindoro,

Paney, Negros, and Magindanao. At daylight on the 22d, they arrived within a league or two of Samboangon, a creek on the island of Magindanao; and as they were in want of wood and water, and fresh provisions, they hoisted Spanish colours. Unfortunately, while making towards it, the Sibylle ran aground on the north-west point of the small island of Santa-Cruz. The Fox and the two gunboats continued their advance; but at half-past six A.M., the wind suddenly fell, and they were compelled to let go their anchors within a mile and a half, and just abreast, of the fort of Samboangon. The Sibylle about this time got off; but, in the dead calm that prevailed, was unable to join her consort. A Spanish boat from the shore pulled out to the Fox, and inquired her name, whence she came, whither she was bound, and what she wanted. To these questions, it is needless to say that Captain Malcolm's reply conveyed very little information, and the Spaniards, alarmed and suspicious, returned to the shore in all haste. The two frigates then hoisted the Union Jack; and the Fox and the two gun-boats opened a fire upon the fort, which the latter and a 12-gun battery duly returned, though the distance prevented any injury being done on either side. At eight o'clock a fresh land breeze sprang up, and the Fox weighed anchor, and stood up to join the Sibylle. The wind about noon veered to the west, and then the two frigates, with the gunboats, bore down towards the fort, which the Sibylle promptly engaged, while the Fox "pitched into" the western battery. For upwards of an hour the firing was strictly maintained; until Captain Cooke, finding that the guns of the battery told with some severity, ordered Captain Malcolm, with three

boats from each frigate, to endeavour to effect a landing to the westward, and carry the battery by assault.

The crews were quickly mustered, and, armed with pistol and cutlass, pushed off in the boats on their dangerous enterprise. A shot from the battery struck the Fox's cutter, killed two seamen, wounded three others, and knocked a hole in the bottom. Fortunately she went down in shoal water, and close to a sandbank, on which Captain Malcolm and the remainder of the crew contrived to effect a landing. They then found that the launch had grounded on the same bank. Collecting his men, Captain Malcolm prepared to push for the shore; but it was soon discovered that this was rendered impossible by the deep water within the bank, and as by this time the enemy had lined the beach with a strong force of soldiers, Malcolm recalled his boats, and returned to the ships. The combat being evidently conducted on unequal terms, Captain Cooke signalled for the two frigates to stand out of gunshot. The Fox had two seamen killed and eleven wounded; besides two killed and five wounded in the loss of the cutter. The Sibylle had her master and one marine killed, and one wounded.

On the 23d, the ships having refitted, and destroyed the gunboats, after taking out of them their stores and equipments, stood to the northward. Four days later, being very short of water, they put into the harbour of Pellock, which is situated on the north coast of Magindanao. At daybreak on the 31st, three boats from each frigate were sent ashore to bring away the lost hands. Those of the Fox returned on board in safety; but at nine A.M., some of the men belonging to the Sibylle's boats could be seen running full speed to the beach, gesticulat-

ing violently, and making signals for assistance. All the boats of both frigates were immediately manned and armed, and, led by Captains Cooke and Malcolm, pulled towards the shore. A strong force was landed, when it was found that the natives had suddenly attacked the watering party, had killed two, and mortally wounded one. Nine were amissing; and it was supposed that the savages had carried them off into the woods. The remainder were saved by the opportune arrival of relief. The surrounding country was carefully reconnoitred, but no trace could be discovered of the missing men. Captain Cooke was compelled to content himself, therefore, with setting the native village on fire, and cutting down the crops, as an act of retribution. The men were then embarked, and pulled back to the ships, which set sail for Mindanao. Here Captain Cooke had an interview with the Sultan, and succeeded in obtaining from him a promise that he would use every effort to secure the missing men, if alive. Eventually the promise was fulfilled, and the men were restored. Meanwhile, the Sibylle and the Fox set sail for Canton, as Captain Cooke was under orders to convoy to England a fleet of merchant vessels.

Here, then, our narrative may terminate, as we have been able to afford the reader "a peep" at the nature of the services rendered by our navy in time of war. It will be seen that, apart from engagements with hostile fleets, from combats with swift vessels, from blockades of the enemy's harbours, our war-ships have many important duties to perform; as, indeed, must necessarily be the case when they are called upon to protect the interests, or assert the power, of an empire which

stretches its arms into every quarter of the globe. It is not only the coast-line of our islands that they are required to defend, but that of the many dependencies and colonies of the United Kingdom. They must carry the honour of the British flag in every sea. They must guard the great highways of commerce, and be prepared to shelter our traders from hostile attack. And for tasks so various something more than courage is necessary, something more even than nautical skill: there must be the enthusiasm of patriotism, and the confidence of discipline. Our mariners must be as ready to endure and obey as they are prompt to dare. These, indeed, have ever been the special qualities of British seamen, and these it is which have surrounded the annals of our navy with so great and permanent a lustre.



## XIV.

### *THE LEANDER AND THE GÉNÉREUX.*

A.D. 1798.



E have seen that among the British ships which distinguished themselves at the Nile was the Leander. She was the smallest, but her commander, Captain Thompson, fought her with not less skill than resolution. After the victory was secured, Nelson selected her to carry Captain Berry, his flag-captain, with despatches for Admiral Earl St Vincent, commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean fleet, then keeping watch and ward over the Spanish in Cadiz. For this purpose the Leander quitted Aboukir Bay on the 6th of August. All went well until the 18th, when she was caught in a calm off the west shore of Goza di Candia; and discovered, bearing up under a press of canvas, with a favourable south-easterly breeze, a French line-of-battle ship. Being eighty short of her full complement of men, and having on board a number of the wounded from the victorious fleet, Captain Thompson would willingly have avoided an engagement with an enemy, obviously of far superior force; but as the Leander sailed badly, and the French ship had the advantage of the wind, she was

compelled to await "the shock of arms." The Frenchman proved to be the *Généreux*, which had made her escape from the disaster of the Nile. She mounted 80 heavy guns, throwing a broadside of 1024 lbs. weight. Her crew numbered 936 men, and she measured 1926 tons. On the other hand, the *Leander* was only 1052 tons, was armed with no more than 52 guns, throwing a broadside of 432 lbs.; and her crew mustered only 282 men and boys, including the wounded. It was a case, indeed, of giant and dwarf; and from the beginning of the fight the defeat of the *Leander* was almost a foregone conclusion.

At nine o'clock in the morning, the *Généreux*, being within half gun-shot, summoned the *Leander* to surrender, by firing a gun ahead of her. The British frigate simply replied with a well-directed broadside, thus openly defying her formidable adversary. A heavy cannonade ensued, the two ships still closing together; and the *Leander* fired with a coolness and a precision which could not have been equalled had she been simply taking part in some grand naval display. The *Généreux* was so much damaged by her guns that her captain, at about half-past ten, resolved to board, so as to take advantage of his numerical superiority. The *Leander* having suffered severely in her spars and rigging, was unable to sheer off; and the French man-of-war fell upon her larboard bow with a crash that "bent double several of the *Leander*'s lower deck ports." For some time the two vessels lay yard-arm to yard-arm.

The *Leander*, however, had been trained under Nelson's flag, and their captain was as gallant an officer as the British service could boast of; he cheered his men by

his words and his example ; and each boarding-party that attempted to gain a footing on the Leander's deck was repulsed by a sharp continuous fire of musketry. Foiled in this effort, the Généreux availed herself of a rising breeze to press ahead of her plucky little antagonist, who had lost her foretop-mast and her mizzen-mast, and had her rigging literally cut to pieces. The Généreux then came up in the wind, on the starboard tack ; but Captain Thompson, by a skilful manœuvre, contrived to luff under her stern, and to pelt her with every gun that was still efficient.

So the fight continued. The deck of the Leander ran with blood ; her spars were shattered in splinters ; and great shot-holes in her blackened sides attested the fury of the enemy's fire. Still she maintained a steady defence. Her crew were spent and weary with half-a-day's fighting ; but their hearts were fresh, if their physical strength gave way. At half-past three, the breeze again woke the waters with a ripple, enabling the Généreux to take up a threatening position on the Leander's starboard bow, where most of the guns had been rendered unserviceable by the wreck of fallen spars. Captain Thompson felt that further resistance would be unjustifiable. He could hope neither to conquer nor escape. His ship rolled on the waves like a log ; out of her 268 men and boys, more than a third had been put *hors de combat* (35 killed and 58 wounded, among whom were Captain Thompson and Captain Berry). A French jack was attached to a pike, and the pike raised aloft as a signal of surrender. The Généreux immediately took possession of her prize.

She had won her victory at heavy cost (between 90 and

100 killed, and 188 wounded), and her captains and officers proceeded to disgrace and discredit it by their ill-treatment of their gallant prisoners. It was with difficulty they could be induced to allow their surgeon to dress Captain Thompson's severe wounds. They robbed the Leander's officers of almost all their effects. This unworthy conduct continued even after the arrival of the two ships at Corfu ; and several of the men were detained after the rest had received parole. Sometime afterwards, when the *Généreux* was blockaded in the harbour by a Turco-Russian squadron, Lijoille, her captain, would fain have obtained their assistance to cut his way through the line of hostile vessels. "No, you French rascal!" exclaimed one of the maintop-men ; "give us back our little ship, and we'll fight you again till we sink!"

When Captain Thompson eventually returned to England, he was received with the welcome due to a man of the highest courage. The honour of knighthood was afterwards bestowed upon him ; for it was felt that, next to a victory, such a defeat as he had sustained illustrated all the finest qualities of the British seaman.



XV.

*HOW WE THRASHED "THE DONS;"*

OR, THE CAPTURE OF THE HERMIONE.

A.D. 1799.



T was the night of the 22d of September, 1797. One of the king's 32-gun frigates, the Hermione, was cruising off the west coast of the beautiful Island of Porto Rico, under the command of Captain Hugh Pigot. Captain Pigot appears to have been a brave man and a good sailor ; but he was a very severe disciplinarian, and at no time succeeded in gaining the affection of his crew. On the 21st, while the men were aloft, reefing the topsails, he had threatened to flog the last man off the mizzentopsail yard. The poor fellows, well knowing that he would keep his word—though the lot would necessarily fall on the outerraost, and therefore the most active—did their best to escape the promised punishment. In the rivalry that ensued, two of them, who, from their position, could not reach the topmast rigging, made a spring so as to get over their comrades within them ; they missed their hold, fell with a terrible crash on the quarter-deck, and were both killed. When this sad accident was re-

ported to Captain Pigot, he angrily replied, "Throw the lubbers overboard." Not content with this display of heartless indifference, he severely reprimanded the other men on coming down, and threatened them with the cat-o'-nine-tails.

Such conduct, coming upon a long series of acts of rigour and oppression, inflamed the minds of the crew to a dangerous extent. They met in little knots to discuss their grievances, and, though dispersed by their officers, contrived to agree upon a common course of action, and to devise a scheme of vengeance. On the evening of the 22d, double-headed shot were rolled heavily about the deck ; and the first lieutenant, on going forward to inquire into the circumstance, was wounded in the arm with a tomahawk. Alarmed and surprised, he returned to the quarter-deck ; but after a minute or two's reflection, again advanced, in the hope of pacifying the malcontents. Mad with rage, and conscious that they had already sinned against order and discipline, they rushed upon him, cut his throat, and threw the dead body overboard. Hearing a noise, Captain Pigot ran upon deck. He was driven back by the infuriated mutineers, bleeding with many wounds. No one ever doubted his courage ; and in this dark hour it was very manifest. He seated himself in his cabin with heroic composure, and, when the mutineers rushed in, faced them calmly. Over-powered by numbers, he was forced out of the cabin windows, and was heard to speak as the waves carried him astern. Eight other officers met with a similar fate ; only the master, the gunner, the carpenter, and a midshipman escaping destruction.

The mutineers were soon in undisturbed possession

of the ship, which they hastened to carry into La Guayra, a port of the Spanish main, pretending, when questioned by the Spanish governor, that they had sent their officers adrift in the jolly-boat. He showed no anxiety to investigate the truth of the statement, and seized upon the ship, which, in spite of the representatives of the British authorities in the West Indies, was fitted up as a Spanish frigate.

Harsh and unjustifiable as had been the conduct of Captain Pigot, no defence could be attempted by the mutineers, who became not only murderers but traitors ; and it is satisfactory to know that many of them were afterwards captured, tried, and punished for their crimes. It has been very well said, that if the captain had been the sole victim of their wrath, the public indignation might have been appeased as soon as his arbitrary practices became known ; but who could pity men whose indiscriminate rage had led them to slaughter almost all their officers, including even a young midshipman and the captain's clerk? That men thus foully stained with blood should betray their offended country was but the natural consequence of the enormity of their guilt; they knew that they could not hope for pardon. Of those subsequently taken and brought to punishment, some out of contrition, and others in the very bravado of crime, made a full confession, and thus furnished minute details of a transaction which has happily few parallels in the history of the British navy.

The conduct of the Spaniards in retaining possession of a vessel acquired under such grievous circumstances was contrary to the law of nations ; and many a British

officer longed for an opportunity to restore her to the British flag. It happened that in September, 1799, just two years after the mutiny, Sir Hyde Parker, who was then acting as commander-in-chief at Jamaica, received intelligence of the intended departure of the *Hermione* from Puerto Cabello to the Havannah. It occurred to Admiral Parker that it might be possible to intercept her on her voyage, and for this purpose he despatched from Port Royal, on the 20th, the *Surprise* frigate, 28 guns, Captain Edward Hamilton. This frigate had formerly belonged to the French, having been captured by the *Inconstant*, in April, 1796. At this time she mounted 24 carronades,<sup>1</sup> 32 pounders, on her maindeck, and eight 18 pounders on her quarterdeck and forecastle, besides a couple of "long sixes," as they were called, at the bows. Her tonnage was only 579, and her crew consisted of no more than 197 men and boys.

Captain Hamilton, an officer of great energy and daring, had already proposed to Sir Hyde to attempt the cutting out of the *Hermione*, if, to the complement of the *Surprise*, he would add a barge and 20 men; but the admiral refused, on the ground that the enterprise was too hazardous. The next morning Captain Hamilton sailed with sealed orders, to be opened off the east end of Jamaica. On arriving there, he found directions to take up his station off Cape Della-Vella, on the Spanish main; a bold headland about 60 or 80 leagues to leeward of Puerto Cabello, where the *Hermione* lay at anchor. There he was to keep watch as long as his pro-

<sup>1</sup> A short and light iron gun, so named because first manufactured at the Carron Iron Works, in Scotland.

visions, wood, and water would allow, and to use every exertion to intercept the *Hermione*, if she put to sea. Captain Hamilton made haste to obey orders; and for several weeks the *Surprise* sailed wearily to and fro in the shadow of the Cape. At length, finding his supplies growing short, and beginning to fear that the hoped-for prize must have stolen away under cover of the night, he beat up to windward with the view of reconnoitring the harbour of Puerto Cabello. He reached the mouth of the harbour on the evening of the 21st of October, and discovered the *Hermione* moored head and stern between two strong batteries mounting nearly 100 guns. Her sails were bent, and evidently she was ready for sea.

For the next three days Captain Hamilton stood off and on, waiting for the enemy to come out. But the Spanish "Dons" showing no inclination to accept the rough hospitality of the British captain, he resolved in his own mind to put "a little compulsion" upon them! But not a word of his meditated scheme did he broach to his officers until after dinner on the evening of the 24th. Its boldness did not make them uneasy; they were ready to do anything. So he ordered the crew to be sent aft, and addressed them in a spirited speech, plain enough to be understood by any one of his listeners, and so full of fire that it could not fail to kindle their enthusiasm. He reminded them of the many successful affairs in which he and they had been engaged. They had often defeated the French; what should hinder them from thrashing the Spaniards? "I find it useless," he said, "to wait any longer for the *Hermione* to accept our challenge. We shall soon be obliged

to leave the station, and she will become the prize of some ship more fortunate than the *Surprise*; our only prospect of success is by cutting her out this night." Then he was interrupted by three noble cheers, testifying to the anxiety of the crew to undertake the work. "I shall lead you myself," he added; "and here are the orders for the six boats to be employed, with the names of the officers and men who are to man them."

The six boats' crews were immediately mustered, and instructed to dress themselves in blue, so that no white of any kind might be visible. The pass-word was *Britannia*; the answer or countersign *Britannica*. The necessary preparations were soon completed; and at half-past seven the boats were hoisted out, the men took their places, and the expedition started. The enterprise was desperate and difficult; but the Jack Tars could scarcely conceal the eager merriment with which they entered upon it. The boarders were to take the first spell at the oars, but on approaching the *Hermione* were to be relieved by the regular crews. Gliding over the darkened waves,—for night was fast arising up from the west,—the boats sped forward in two divisions; in the first, the pinnace, the launch, and the jolly-boat, to board on the starboard (or inside) bow, gangway, and quarter; in the second, the gig, the black and the red cutters, to board on the larboard or outside bow, gangway, and quarter. The pinnace, carrying the gunner, a midshipman, and 16 men, was under the orders of the captain; the launch, with one midshipman and 24 men, was commanded by Lieutenant Wilson; the jolly-boat contained one midshipman, the carpenter, and eight men. These boats formed the first division. The pinnace was

directed to board on the starboard gangway; the launch on the starboard bow, but retaining four men to cut the lower cable (for which purpose a platform was run up over her quarter, and the men were provided with sharp axes); while the jolly-boat boarded on the starboard quarter, cut the stern cable, and sent a couple of men aloft to loose the mizzentopsail. As to the second division, the gig, with 16 men, was under the command of Mr M'Mullen, the ship's surgeon; the black cutter, with 16 men, under Lieutenant Hamilton, and the acting officer of the marines, M. de la Tour du Pin; and the red cutter, with 16 men, under the boatswain. Total force of the little flotilla, 96 men and 10 officers. The gig was directed to board on the larboard bow, and send five men aloft to loose the foretopsail; the black cutter, to attack by the larboard gangway, and the red cutter by the larboard quarter. Each division to be ready to tow. Finally, in concluding his precise and intelligible instructions, Captain Hamilton gave the six boats to understand that, if they reached the ship undiscovered, none but the boarders were to board; while the crews remained in the boats, and took the ship in tow (with hook ropes carefully provided), as soon as the cables were cut. If, however, the enemy, who was probably on the watch—as the neighbourhood of the Surprise and her object could not but be known—should prove to be prepared, sight the advancing boats, and render a favourable approach impossible.—then the crew of each boat was also to board, and everybody was to lend a hand in "thrashing the Dons," and recovering one of old England's frigates. The rendezvous was to be on the Hermione's quarter-deck.

Captain Hamilton's combined eagerness and anxiety were so great, that he never lost sight of the Hermione from the moment he quitted the Surprise until his pinnace lay alongside. He stood up in the stern sheets, with his night-glass to his eye, and gave directions by which a direct course was steered towards the frigate. But when within a mile of her, a couple of gunboats, each carrying a long gun, discovered them. The alarm was given, and some rapid firing began. Captain Hamilton immediately cut off the tow, and his men giving three hearty cheers, he pushed for the frigate, thinking that the others would follow his example. But some of his boats, in their desire to get at the enemy, fell to loggerheads with the gunboats, and by this disobedience of orders nearly ruined their commander's hopes.

The crew of the Hermione was awakened to a scene of their danger by the rapid firing. Lights soon blazed at every port; and the ship's company beat to quarters, ready to drive back the daring assailants. As the pinnace shot across the frigate's bows to her appointed station, a shot from one of the forecastle guns passed over her, but did no mischief. A rope, however, which ran from the frigate's bows to the buoy over her anchor, caught the rudder of the pinnace, and held her fast. The coxswain sung out that the boat was aground. That this could not be the case was evident, for the frigate was afloat. The captain, therefore, ordered the rudder to be unshipped; but observing that the starboard oars of the pinnace touched the ship's bends, the boat lying under the starboard cathead and forechains, he called to his men to lay in their oars and board. They

obeyed with a will, and were soon up the ship's sides, scrambling with the agility of cats ; though their captain would have forestalled them, and been the first on the deck, had not his foot slipped on a muddy anchor, which was hanging from the bow. Fortunately he got hold of the fore-shrouds and recovered himself, his pistol going off in the struggle.

Captain Hamilton and his little company were thus on the forecastle ; and some of the men immediately set to work to free the foresail, laying it over the forestay in such wise that it served as an admirable screen for the daring boarders. Pushing forward, they were greatly surprised to find the crew of the *Hermione* at their guns on the maindeck, and raining shot at some object in the darkness, which they ingenuously supposed to be a couple of English frigates bearing down to attack them ! It was clear that they had no idea of what had occurred on the forecastle ! Captain Hamilton, having swept the forecastle clear, advanced by the starboard gangway to the quarterdeck, where, however, the Spaniards were more on the alert. They formed themselves into a compact body, and hastened to dispute the possession of the gangway. Meanwhile, the gig's crew, led by the surgeon, had boarded, and, instead of making for the quarterdeck, followed the Spaniards as they advanced on the starboard gangway, thus placing them between two fires. While the fight was thus proceeding, Captain Hamilton stood alone on the quarterdeck, waiting the arrival of the remaining boats. Four Spaniards rushed upon him, and one of them, with a blow from the butt of his musket, laid him prostrate. He fell on the combings of the after-hatchway, stunned by the blow, which

had been dealt with so much violence that the Spaniard's weapon snapped in his hands. The captain must have perished, but for the opportune arrival of two or three of his men, who cut down his assailants. On recovering from his wound, he rallied a few British seamen round him, and stoutly opposed the efforts of the enemy to gain the quarterdeck by the after-hatchway. The conflict still hung in the balance, when M. de la Tour du Pin boarded with the marines from the black cutter over the larboard gangway, and gave the victory to the British.

We must follow for a moment the movements of the crew of the black cutter. When they first essayed to board, they were led by their officer, Lieutenant Hamilton, who, as he mounted the gangway steps, was knocked down, and by his fall occasioned that of his followers ; some of whom (says James) " were much injured by this retrograde movement." Shoving off, they pulled round the frigate's stern, and tried on the starboard side. Here the enemy were in too great force to be encountered ; so the black cutter returned to its former post, and essayed a second attempt, which proved successful. The marines were immediately formed ; a volley was poured down the after-hatchway ; and away went our warriors, with levelled steel, to carry the maindeck. About 60 Spaniards retreated to the cabin and surrendered : without delay they were disarmed, secured, and the doors bolted upon them. On the maindeck and forecastle some fighting still continued, but no serious resistance was offered. The carpenter by this time had cut the stern cable ; the launch coming up, the bower cable was also cut ; the foretopsail was shaken loose ; the boats took the frigate in tow ; while the helm was taken in hand by

the gunner and a couple of men, all of whom were bleeding from severe wounds. The canvas quickly filled ; and to the great joy of Captain Hamilton and his gallant followers, the *Hermione*, with a favouring breeze, began to run swiftly out of Puerto Cabello.

She had still to pass the gauntlet of the batteries, which seemed at last to awake to the state of affairs, and began to open their iron mouths with astonishing vehemence. Some of the shot took effect below the water-line, and others did considerable mischief to the rigging ; but the *Hermione* held on her course undaunted. Antonio, the Portuguese coxswain of the gig, overheard the Spanish prisoners scheming, and making preparations to blow up the frigate ; but a few muskets fired down the hatchway reduced them to obedience ; and by one o'clock, or in less than an hour from the attack by the pinnace, all opposition ceased, and the *Hermione* once more hoisted English colours. At two A.M., the ship having cleared the batteries, the towing-boats were called alongside. "It was now, for the first time, that the people from them set their feet on board the frigate."

This singular achievement was effected with a trifling loss to the victors, who had only twelve wounded, and none killed. On the other hand, the Spaniards had no fewer than 119 killed and 97 wounded.

I have called it a "singular achievement ;" and, in truth, the naval annals of our own or any other nation can hardly produce its parallel. The *Hermione* was anchored under cover of a couple of formidable batteries, and manned by a crew of 365 men. She was not taken unawares ; for the approach of the British was discovered, and her men were at quarters, armed, and standing to

their guns, when the attack was made. Yet in less than an hour she was captured by a handful of British seamen ! The first success was gained by the captain and only sixteen men, and the final conquest was made by the crews of *three* boats, the others not having come up in time. It would be an injustice to the Spaniards to accuse them of cowardice. Their loss shows that they stood to their posts ; and the victory of the British must be attributed to their superior morale, and the impression of dismay and discouragement produced by the daring character of their enterprise. The Spaniards seem to have felt that when half a hundred men rushed headlong to an encounter with seven times their number,<sup>1</sup> resistance became useless. They were as much paralysed as the combatants in the *Iliad* when one of the Olympian deities engaged in the affray.

Captain Hamilton, with his prize in company, dropped anchor in the broad waters of Port Royal on the 1st of November. Having been thoroughly refitted, while carrying the Spanish flag, she was at once restored to her rank in old England's navy, under the significant name of the Retribution. Her gallant captor's wounds proved to be of a sufficiently serious nature, and left him for some time in an enfeebled condition. We have referred to the tremendous blow which he received on his head from the butt-end of a musket. He also received a sharp sabre wound on the left thigh, a thrust from a pike in the right thigh, and a contusion on the right shin-bone by a grape-shot. His loins were badly bruised, and one of his fingers was severely cut. In the following

<sup>1</sup> Brunton says the *Hermione* had on board 350 officers and seamen, 56 soldiers, and 15 artillerymen.

April, he was returning to England invalided, when the Jamaica packet, on board of which he sailed as a passenger, was taken by a privateer, and carried into a French port. Thence he was sent to Paris, where Napoleon treated him with marked distinction, and finally consented to his being exchanged for six midshipmen.

He was duly rewarded for his brilliant "feat of arms." The Jamaica House of Assembly presented him with a sword, valued at 300 guineas; and the king knighted him, and gave him a gold medal.<sup>1</sup> The Corporation of London voted to him the freedom of the city.

In this way "the Dons" were soundly thrashed; and in this way was a British frigate, betrayed to the enemy by mutineers, restored, under circumstances of never-to-be-forgotten glory, to the flag of England.

Under cover of the night  
Stole our boats into the bay,  
While our captain—gallant heart!—  
Like a hero led the way.

Soon we gained the frigate's sides;  
Soon at stem and stern we lay;  
And with cutlass, pistol, pike,  
Made ready for the fray.

With a cheer we swung aloft,  
And on her deck set foot,  
Before the Dons—d'ye see?—  
Could give us a salute!

<sup>1</sup> He was afterwards created a baronet. A representation of the enterprise which he planned so ably, and led so chivalrously, is among the ornaments of the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital.

And we put the matter thus :

“ This frigate, as ye know,  
To old England once belong’d,  
And there again must go !

For ye won her not in fight,  
And yours she shall not be ; ”  
And we axed them to give up  
Our own Hermionè !

Tho’ the justice of this course  
Was manifestly clear,  
Our little argument  
Those Spaniards would not hear !

But they forced us to be rude,  
Which no British tars desire,  
And to sweep the frigate’s deck  
With a rolling storm of fire !

Aye, we plied each cutlass well,  
Aye, each pike thrust firm and true  
Till half a hundred Englishmen  
Had thrash’d a frigate’s crew.

Then we hoisted Britain’s flag,  
A glorious sight to see,  
And past the Spanish guns we tow’d  
Our own Hermionè !







AN ENGLISH FRIGATE.

## XVI.

### *A FRIGATE ACTION.*

A.D. 1805.



ONE of the bravest and most zealous officers of the British navy, in 1805, was Captain Thomas Baker, of the good frigate *Phœnix*. He had been bred in Nelson's school, and when he saw an enemy had learned not to calculate odds. Firm, but just and generous, he kept his crew in excellent discipline, while he did not lose their affection. His officers gave him their fullest confidence and attachment. He had been despatched from Portsmouth with important communications for the Mediterranean fleet; but on the 10th of August, discovering a strange sail in the south-west, in lat.  $43^{\circ} 16'$ , N., and long.  $12^{\circ} 14'$  W., he conceived it to be his duty, as a British captain, to give chase. Towards evening he was near enough to make out that the object of his pursuit was a French frigate, much larger than his own *Phœnix*. She was on the larboard tack, with foresail and royals set; but as she had thrown her mizzen-topsail aback, it was evident that she was lying-to, and challenging a combat.

As it was not usual for French warships, in the old Nelson days, to seek an engagement with English vessels,

I must explain why the Didon assumed this novel attitude. Her commander, M. Milius, was a brave man; but, like most French captains, he was disposed to believe in British invincibility at sea, unless the odds *were* very great. And on this occasion he thought the odds *were* very great, and all in his favour, for he had been misled by the idle talk of a Yankee skipper, who had fallen in with the Phœnix and been well received on board; who, the next day, had met the Didon, and had had another hospitable reception; and, in return, had amused the French captain with a fancy sketch of the British frigate. She was only a twenty-gun ship, he said; twenty guns, and crew to match; but such was the insular conceit of her captain and officers, that he had no doubt they would attack the Didon. Whether he thought the French frigate would crush the British, or that the British would defeat the French, I cannot determine; but evidently the object of his misrepresentations was to encourage M. Milius to an encounter. In this he succeeded.

The comparative strength of the two combatants was as follows:—

	Guns.	Men.	Tons.
Didon, . .	44	330	1001
Phœnix, . .	36	245	884

In all respects the French frigate had the advantage.

The Didon opened fire at a quarter to nine o'clock. To guard against any attempt on the part of her antagonist to make sail, if she had more fighting than she wished for, Captain Baker resolved to engage her to leeward. With this view he steered across her bows, in

the meantime reserving his fire ; while the Frenchman, equally solicitous to prevent the escape of his anticipated prize, filled, wore round, and came-to again on the opposite tack, hurling a broadside at the bows of the *Phoenix*. Three times the *Didon* performed this manœuvre, until Captain Baker, observing the impatience of his men to get at their enemy, and convinced of the superior sailing qualities of the French frigate, run at her to windward, and within pistol-shot distance poured in his artillery.

The press of sail she was carrying then forced the *Phoenix* ahead ; whereupon the *Didon* hauled up to the wind, and, crossing in her rear, endeavoured to rake her deck with a full broadside. Standing up on the larboard tack, she brought her starboard guns to bear. These manœuvres could not be prevented by Captain Baker, owing to the damaged condition of his rigging ; but he ordered his men to lie down, and the enemy's fire did little mischief. While the *Didon* was hauling up again with inhospitable intentions, the crew of the *Phoenix* sufficiently repaired their rigging to enable her sails to be thrown aback with alacrity ; and in this way it came to pass that the *Didon*'s larboard bow fell against the British frigate's starboard quarter. Both ships then lay in an almost parallel direction ; but the *Didon* could no longer use her heavy broadside guns, and was reduced to the fire of a thirty-six pounder brass cannonade, mounted on her forecastle.

The French now made a desperate attempt to board. Their superiority of numbers necessarily told in close fighting ; but such was the resolution of the gallant " *Phoenixes*," and the cool and calm courage of the small

detachment of marines on board, that, after a sharp struggle, they were driven back. It then occurred to Captain Baker that great results might be expected if he could bring a maindeck gun to bear upon the enemy. He had already had the woodwork of the cabin window next the quarter, on each side, cut down in such a way as to convert it into a port hole, for use when a gun could not be served from the regular stern port next to the rudder head. Unfortunately, it turned out that though the ports were ready, the gunner had neglected to prepare tackle sufficiently long enough for the transport thither of the aftermost maindeck guns.

The ingenuity of the British tar, however, is seldom at fault; and while the French musketry from the Didon's larboard gangway piteously raked the cabin deck, the men of the Phoenix set to work to improvise the means of moving the gun. Successful at last, they ran it out with a ringing cheer; and its first discharge, sweeping the Frenchman's deck from bow to stern, killed and wounded twenty-four of the crew.

Meanwhile the fury of the action had not slackened. On the quarter deck of the Phoenix, her marines and marksmen maintained an incessant musketry fire, directing it at the French marines who were harassing severely the gunners in the cabin. Others covered the cannonade on the French forecastle with their guns, so that the sailors of the Didon could make but little use of it, being picked off as fast as they ran forward. For many an hour this close fighting had continued, and the Didon then began to move ahead. Whereupon Captain Baker ordered the second aftmost gun to be run out, and its discharge crippled the bowsprit of the French

frigate. The two ships again engaged yardarm to yard-arm, and cannonaded each other with ever-increasing fury. In this phase of the contest the British had the better of it. They handled their guns with superior alacrity, and fired with such precision that every shot told. Moreover, they seemed animated by a wonderful heroic courage. The same resolute conquering spirit glowed in the breast of the common sailor as in that of Captain Baker himself. Even the purser, who, when his ship is in action, generally remains in the cockpit, could not be prevented from making his appearance on deck, broadsword in hand, and a couple of pistols in his belt. He stationed himself on the quarter-deck, and, by his hearty speech and gallant bearing, gave a fresh inspiration to his comrades. "Give it to her, my lads!" and at each call the men loaded their guns the faster, and poured their volleys the more vigorously into the *Didon*. The very midshipmen behaved like veterans; and one of them, Edward Phillips, saved his captain's life. While the ships were in close contact, a French seaman on the *Didon*'s bowsprit end was seen to aim his musket deliberately at Captain Baker. Young Phillips, who, with a gun in his hand, was standing near his commander, thrust the latter aside with scant ceremony and fired. The shot was so true, that in a moment the Frenchman fell into the sea, mortally wounded. Captain Baker's escape was sufficiently narrow; the bullet intended for his head rent the rim of his cocked hat.

Another midshipman, Edward Curling, proceeded, in the thick of the fight, to quench his thirst with an orange. While he was engaged in sucking it, a musket ball, which had passed through the head of one of the seamen,

struck him in the cheek, severed the orange, and came out at the other cheek, without injuring the jaw or teeth. It may be added, that the wounds healed, leaving only a scar on each cheek, of which Curling had no cause to be ashamed.

All on board the *Phoenix* were fired by the same resolute intrepidity. The invalids left their cots ; and since they were too feeble to assist at the guns, filled the powder cans, and carried them from point to point, triumphing over bodily weakness and depression. The issue of a contest, fought with so much noble patience and chivalrous ardour, could not be doubtful.

The chief injuries which the British frigate had sustained were in her canvas and rigging ; and these had been so torn and shattered, that she was almost unmanageable. She had lost her mainroyal-mast, maintopsail-yard, and gaff. The breeze going down, she hauled up to repair damages, and the *Didon* followed her example. The latter, however, had suffered much more severely, and scarcely a single spar but bore witness to the terrible accuracy of the British fire. In bearing up, she had the misfortune to lose her foremast ; whereat the *Phœnixes* cheered lustily, and set to work to trim their sails, reeve fresh braces, and renew their rigging, in order to resume the engagement. With the first breath of wind, the frigate bore down on the crippled *Didon*, which, as soon as her victorious antagonist had got within range, hauled down her colours.

She had been well fought ; so well that it was the greater honour to the *Phoenix* to have conquered. Her crew, composed of picked men, had behaved with a gallantry worthy of their gallant nation. They were

beaten by the superior coolness of the British, which enabled them to direct their fire with the utmost steadiness, and by their loftier *morale*. I do not know that any single action in the revolutionary war was more creditable to the navies of both countries than this of the Phoenix and the Didon. The British, on taking possession of their prize, had to cut away her mainmast, stop her leaks, and bend new canvas. A couple of jury masts were quickly rigged up, and, with the help of the Phoenix, the Didon steered for a British port.

The captor and her prize joined the Dragon, 74-gun ship, on the evening of the 14th, and, in company with her, ran almost into the jaws of the French fleet, under M. Villeneuve, then bound for Cadiz. The Phoenix, with the Didon in tow, immediately crowded on all sail to the southward, hotly pursued by a division of the French fleet. The battle continued until sunset, when the French ships suddenly tacked, and made haste to rejoin their admiral. Passing Lisbon, the Phoenix bore up for Gibraltar in a dense fog, hearing all around her the discharge of signal-guns and the ringing of alarm bells. Shortly after, she fell in with the Euryalus frigate, and learned that she was again in the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy's fleet. At once she changed her course to the westward, leaving Villeneuve to meet his fate in a few short weeks at immortal Trafalgar.

Captain Baker might be pardoned if he thought that at last all danger was over, and that his homeward voyage would be accomplished without further misadventure. But such was not to be the case. The pilot of the Phoenix was a Jersey seaman, and had some

knowledge of the French language. Hence he was enabled to make out the drift of a conversation among the prisoners, who outnumbered the crew of the *Phœnix*—at least all who could do duty—and he discovered that they had plotted to carry the frigate by a *coup de main*, and afterwards to recapture the *Didon*.

Captain Baker took instant measures to ensure the safety of his vessel. The guard over the prisoners was increased, and some cannons placed so as to command the lower deck. The ringleader was then seized, and brought before Captain Baker and the French commander. The latter behaved with the frankness of a man of honour. "Have you any complaints," he said to the man, "to make of the manner in which you are treated?" "No," he replied. "I know you have not; for every morning I receive a report which shows me that you are generously treated. Had it been otherwise, I would myself have headed a movement to obtain redress. I beseech you, sir," he continued, turning to Captain Baker; "put this fellow in irons."

The plot having failed thus ignominiously, no further incident occurred on the homeward voyage of the *Phœnix*, which anchored with her prize in Plymouth Sound on the 3d of September.

It is to be regretted that Captain Baker was honoured with no mark of distinction for this really brilliant capture of a French frigate of greatly superior force.

## XVII.

### *THE SHANNON AND THE CHESAPEAKE.*

A.D. 1813.

“ And, as the war they did provoke,  
We'll pay them with our cannon ;  
The first to do it will be Broke,  
In the gallant ship the Shannon.”

*Naval Ballad.*



WAR broke out between Great Britain and the United States in June 1812 ; and the surprise and shame of the country can hardly be imagined when at the outset the weaker power entered on a career of naval success. England had been accustomed by such victories as those of the Nile and Trafalgar, and the exploits of such great commanders as Nelson, Jervis, Collingwood, Parker, Saumarez, Lord Hood, and others, to regard her supremacy at sea as beyond dispute. And now, when ship met ship, it was the English flag that went down ! Disaster followed disaster ; until men, reading of English frigates captured by American frigates, and English sloops captured by American sloops, began to think that the naval glory of Old England had become a thing of the past. The fact was, however, that the so-called American

frigates were really powerful men-of-war, greatly superior in size, guns, weight of metal, and complement of crew, to the English frigates which they fought and captured. In no single instance was an American victory obtained where anything like equality of force prevailed. But as this was not known to the general public, nor even to the navy generally, a feeling of discouragement arose which threatened to have serious consequences.

No such feeling animated the breast of at least one English seaman, Captain Philip Vere Broke, of the Shannon frigate, who had evinced, throughout an active career, the highest military qualities. It was his conviction that English sailors, properly led, and under reasonably fair conditions, were more than a match for the sailors of any other nation. In 1811, his ship, a fine 38-gun frigate, had been ordered to the North American station ; and after the outbreak of the war between the mother country and the United States, he came eagerly to desire an engagement with an American vessel, in the firm belief that he could thrash her.

On the 21st of March, 1813, he sailed from Halifax, in company with the Tenedos, a frigate of equal size, commanded by Captain Hyde Parker. Reconnoitring Boston harbour, the two captains were well pleased to discover there the two first-class American frigates, the President and the Congress ; and, notwithstanding their greater force, they determined to attack them, if fortune gave them an opportunity. Meanwhile, by another channel, the 36-gun frigate Chesapeake slipped into the port. The 1st of May was a day of dense sea-fog ; and under cover of it, the President and the Congress stole out of harbour, and sailed away to the southward ; so that when the English

captains resumed their watch, they found nothing to guard but the Chesapeake. Determined to retrieve the honour of the British navy, but well aware that the American frigate would not abandon her place of refuge in order to fall a prey to two British warships, Captain Broke, as senior officer, sent the *Tenedos* on a cruise, and then invited the Chesapeake to come forth and try conclusions with the Shannon alone. On the 1st of June, the American accepted the challenge, and stood out of Boston harbour with a fair wind, accompanied by a retinue of pleasure boats, the occupants of which were willing to share in, or at least to applaud, her anticipated victory over "the Britishers." Such an anticipation was by no means unreasonable. The Chesapeake was a fine frigate, with 25 broadside guns, throwing 590 pounds weight of metal; and a burthen of 1135 tons. Her commander, Captain Lawrence, was a good officer and seaman, and his crew was composed of picked men, who had sailed together for upwards of two years. In the latter respect the Shannon was not inferior; but its guns threw only 538 pounds of metal, its burthen was only 1006 tons, and its crew numbered only 306 men. The difference between the two frigates will be seen at a glance in the following comparison:—

	Tons.	Men.	Guns.	Weight.
Chesapeake,	1135	376	25	590 lbs.
Shannon,	1006	306	25	538 lbs.

The two ships, after much skilful manœuvring, were about six leagues to the east of Boston, when, at five o'clock p.m., the Shannon hauled up, with her head to the south-east, and lay-to, under light sail, for her an-

gonist to come within range. She carried a union jack at the fore, "and an old rusty blue ensign at the mizzen peak;" while, in case either should be shot away, an ensign on the mainstay, and another in the main rigging, were rolled up and stopped, in readiness to be cast loose. The Chesapeake had hoisted a good deal of bunting ; three ensigns waved from the mizzen royal mast-head, the peak, and the main rigging respectively ; while from the fore floated a large white flag, bearing the mysterious legend of "Sailors' Rights and Free Trade."

At twenty minutes to six, the Chesapeake approached within about fifty yards of the Shannon's starboard quarter, and her crew gave three loud cheers. Ten minutes more, and the first shot was fired by the Shannon, followed by a dropping fire, until, at the thirteenth gun, the Chesapeake replied ; and both ships then poured in their broadsides with furious energy. The marked superiority of the British frigate in gunnery soon became apparent—every shot told. The steersmen of the Chesapeake being swept off by the resistless fire, she fell away so as to lay open her deck to the guns of the Shannon, which raked it "fore and aft," doing tremendous execution. Before long she showed signs of a wish to escape from the contest, and Captain Broke, therefore, luffed up nearer to her, until the two ships fell aboard one another. Broke ordered them to be lashed together ; and calling for the boarders, he leaped upon the frigate's quarter-deck, followed by some twenty seamen. They met at first with no resistance ; but in the gangways about thirty Americans were collected, and a short struggle ensued. British cutlasses, however, forced them towards the quarter-deck, and the survivors, hopeless of reversing the issue of the

day, yielded up their arms, and acknowledged themselves prisoners.

Lieutenants Watt and Falconer, with a party of marines and seamen, supported their commander in his gallant enterprise. Watt, as he stepped on the American frigate's taffrail, was shot in the foot, but quickly recovering himself, he ordered Lieutenant Johns, of the marines, to direct one of the Shannon's nine-pounders at the enemy's tops. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Falconer, with the marines, rushed forward to prevent the Americans from forcing a passage by the main hatchway ; while another party endeavoured to silence the musketry that blazed destructively from the main and mizzen tops.

The Americans on the forecastle having surrendered, Captain Broke placed a sentry over them, and ordered the rest of his crew aft, where the fight was still contested briskly. While issuing his orders, the sentry cried out to him to be upon his guard ; and turning round, Captain Broke discovered that three of the Yankees had treacherously re-armed themselves, and were on the point of attacking him. He turned aside the pike of one of them, and dealt him a blow in the face ; but another struck him heavily with the butt-end of a musket, bruising his skull, and nearly stunning him. The third took advantage of his defencelessness to deal a blow at him with his broadsword, but was himself cut down and slain by one of the Shannon's seamen, named Mindham. Mr Smith, a "midship-mite," Mindham, and another, now assisted their heroic chief to his feet ; and Mindham, while bandaging his wounded head with a handkerchief, pointed aloft, and cried—"Hurrah, sir, hurrah ! Yonder goes up the brave old ensign over the Yankee colours !"

It was hoisted by Lieutenant Watt, and the act cost him his life. For, in his excitement, the halliards being tangled, he bent the union jack *below* instead of *above* the stars and stripes ; and the crew of the Shannon, observing the American ensign ascending first, naturally re-opened fire. They did this with so much fatal precision, that the first half-dozen shots, before the unfortunate mistake could be rectified, killed Watt and four or five English seamen.

About the same time an unexpected fire of musketry was opened by the Americans who had taken refuge in the hold, and a fine young marine fell dead. Thereupon Lieutenant Falconer ordered three or four muskets, which were ready loaded, to be discharged below ; and Captain Broke desired the Lieutenant to summon the crew to surrender, if they hoped for quarter. The threat was effectual ; and all hostilities ceased, having lasted about twenty minutes. The Shannon was then about a hundred yards from her prize, on the larboard quarter. To enable her to close, Broke ordered the American frigate's mainyard to be braced flat aback, and her foresail to be hauled close up. Almost immediately afterwards he swooned from loss of blood ; and the Shannon's jolly-boat arriving with a reinforcement, he was conveyed on board his own ship.

The Chesapeake in this brief but furious fight lost forty-seven killed, besides her captain, her first and second lieutenants, and eleven others, mortally wounded. She had also ninety-nine more or less seriously wounded. In all, one hundred and sixty, or upwards of three-eighths of her total complement.

The Shannon's loss consisted of twenty-four killed and

fifty-nine wounded—eighty-three in all, or two-eighths of her crew.

The Americans, aware that most of the British successes against a superior force had been obtained by boarding, had hoped to check an attempt in this direction by providing a barrel of unslaked lime on her forecastle, so that the crew might fling the contents in the faces of the boarders as they jumped on board. But, by a curious instance of that “even-handed justice” which often commends the poisoned chalice to the poisoner’s own lips, one of the Shannon’s first cannon-balls struck the cask, and dashed its contents into the eyes and over the faces of the projectors of this “infernal machine.”

As soon as both vessels had been refitted, Captain Broke made sail for Halifax, where he arrived on the 8th, with colours flying and uproarious cheers in every street. Captain Lawrence was buried in the parish churchyard with all the honours his intrepidity had deserved ; but a few weeks later the body was removed, by permission of the British Government, to be interred in the captain’s own country. Captain Broke and his men met with a hearty reception on their arrival in England ; a reception they had well deserved, for their victory had revived the old confidence in the national heart, and had proved to the Americans that the British tar, when the terms are tolerably equal, has a “pestilent habit” of turning the tables upon an over-sanguine adversary, and giving him what Wellington calls—“a good drubbing.”

## XVIII.

### *THE RALEIGH AND COMMODORE GOODENOUGH.*

A.D. 1857.

HAT the English seaman of to-day is in no wise inferior, is in some respects superior, to the English seaman of the past, may be learned from the *Life of the late Commodore Goodenough*. These pages, however, are not devoted to biographies, and we shall be content with a few details in illustration and confirmation of the thesis already stated.

While in command of the squadron on the Australian station, it became the commodore's duty to escort to Fiji the newly-appointed governor of that colony, Sir Arthur Gordon. From Fiji he proceeded on a cruise to Roumah, the New Hebrides, and the Santa Cruz groups. The inhabitants of these islands had been inflamed against the "white men" by the cruel deeds of kidnapping captains, and the risk in approaching them was considerable. The commodore sympathized deeply with them in their sufferings, and was anxious to bring the so-called "labour traffic" under proper supervision. Like Bishop Pattison, however, he was fated to fall by the hands of those whom he desired to befriend. Landing at Nuk-

apu, in the Santa Cruz group, he met with an apparently hospitable reception, and accepted the invitation of the natives to accompany them to another village. He had gone about three hundred yards, when "second thoughts" convinced him that his conduct was imprudent; and he turned back, ordering every one to the boats. When all but himself, two officers, and his coxswain had embarked, a native, standing about four yards from him, shot a poisoned arrow, which hit him in the side. A volley of arrows immediately followed. He cried: "To the boats!" and amid a discharge of poisoned weapons which wounded four men, and himself again slightly in the head, got on board and pushed off.

The ship lay about a mile from the shore. In the boat the commodore was very faint from the pain of his wound, which his secretary, Mr Perry, was bravely sucking. But he speedily revived, and went up the ship's side briskly, desiring that immediate attention might be given to the wounded men. As an act of just retribution, the few huts near the scene of the outrage were burned, the natives having been previously driven away by a fire of blank cartridge, and the Pearl then sailed for Mota.

This occurred on the 11th of August. For the next three or four days, though partly confined to his bed, the commodore felt no unfavourable symptoms. But on the following Tuesday, he complained of pain in his back—the first sign that the poison was doing its fatal work. That night he was very restless, and early on the Wednesday morning the doctors detected indications of tetanus. He received the announcement in silence, and with perfect calmness, merely asking, after a little

while, how long it was likely to last ; and as one or another of his officers came in to see him, he told them that he was going to die, adding immediately that he had no fear, but perfect trust in God. The spasms became gradually more frequent and more severe ; but he had, on the whole, a quiet night, his officers watching by him in turns. He occasionally wished to be read to from the Psalms for a short time, but spoke little, and slept between the spasms.

In his last hours Commodore Goodenough displayed the calm unaffected courage and the unostentatious piety which had marked his brief but highly useful career. Such a man does scarcely less to raise the character and elevate the standard of the service to which he belongs than even a Nelson or a St Vincent ; and it is well for England and her navy that of this new type of the British officer—cultivated, humane, earnest, and devout—there should be so many specimens.

Expressing a wish to take leave of the ship's company, who all loved and reverenced him, he was wrapped in blankets, and laid on a bed on the quarter-deck, where the crew gathered round him. "He begged the men to smile at him, and not to look sad. He told them that he was dying, and therefore he wished to say good-bye to them. He told them that he had had a very happy life, and now God was taking him away before he had any sorrow. He told them how happy he was in the sense of God's love, and in the conviction that whatever happened was according to God's will ; and he exhorted them most earnestly to the love of God, saying, 'The love which God Himself will give you if you trust Him is very great ; it will guide all your goings and doings.'

He begged them to try and resist, when on shore, the temptations to sin, which led them to break their laws and desert. 'When you are tempted,' he said, 'think of the love of God.' He concluded by saying, in an earnest tone, 'May God Almighty bless you with His exceeding great love, and give you happiness such as He has given me !'

He lived twenty-four hours longer, suffering much from violent spasms, but at the last passing away so silently and easily that the bystanders knew not the exact moment of his departure. It took place about a quarter-past five on Friday afternoon, August 20th, 1874. Commodore Goodenough was only forty-four years of age when his career was thus prematurely closed by the poisoned arrow of an ignorant savage. He was buried at Sydney, on the 24th, the funeral being attended not only by the crew of the ship which had been under his command, but by several thousands of the inhabitants of the city, who had learned to know and admire his private and public virtues, his truthfulness of character, and his high sense of duty. The estimation in which he was held by those who knew him best may be inferred from the following lines, which we extract from some "In Memoriam" verses, composed by an Australian pen :—

"Slowly the long procession moved, with solemn muffled sound,  
Ere one of England's noblest men is laid in new-world ground !  
Yea, bear him to the sailor's grave with every mourning rite,—  
Perished he yet more bravely than hero in the fight !  
For, when the utmost zeal is done that public grief can show,  
Not half expressed the deep respect that in each heart must flow.  
Oh, truly by such holy dead our virgin earth is blest ;  
We pray our sons may worthy be one day by him to rest.

“Another martyr added to the heathen’s cruel score,  
One who, within the sailor’s heart, Christ’s healing mission bore.  
A man *of* whom, nor yet *from* whom, ne’er one unloving word,  
Throughout his pure, peace-breathing life by human ears was  
heard.  
Not long he dwelt among us ; but noble natures spread  
Their influence quickly, and on all their hallowing radiance shed.  
Of those who loved him, who can tell the burden of their cross ?  
And those who knew not must still mourn the country’s deep-  
felt loss.”

I must now ask the reader to go back with me to the year 1856, when Goodenough, a fine young man of twenty six, was appointed first lieutenant of H.M.’s fifty-gun ship, the Raleigh, bearing the broad pendant of Commodore Hon. N. Keppel. She was ordered to China, and sailed from Plymouth towards the close of the year. She touched at Madeira, at the Cape of Good Hope, at Penang, and at Singapore, making a very swift and prosperous voyage. But, on the 15th of March, 1857, when within one hundred miles of Hong-Kong, she struck upon a rock which the chart did not show the existence of, and was run ashore near Macao, as the only means of saving her.

“I was writing when she struck,” said Lieutenant Goodenough in a bitter tone, “and of course ran up, and found a crowd of pale, inquiring faces, asking what was to come next. To my surprise she did not strike again, but glanced off, and still moved through the water. No masts had come down, though the shock was violent, and we had been going seven knots. Some of the men were saying, ‘She’ll never recover that ; it was an awful blow, and no mistake.’ I rather pooh-poohed, and said to a petty officer, ‘Oh, she may stand many

another like that.' But I thought I would go down to the fore-storeroom, where the shock seemed to have been. On getting down, I heard a rush of water, and when a light was brought saw that the timbers were evidently broken, and the inside planking all started, so that I could thrust in my hand along a space 4 feet long by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  deep, about 14 feet under water.

"As I was leaving the deck, I heard the commodore give orders to sound the wells; and when the carpenter had reported, he ordered him to rig the pumps. In the storeroom I got six of the strongest hands near, to hand everything out of the lower part where the leak was, and before two minutes they were over their knees in water. When the place was clear I went down again, to make sure of the extent of the damage, and thrust my hand in again. It was far too extensive to hope to repair it even temporarily inside. The commander had given orders to prepare a sail to go over the bows, with a view of letting it down weighted, till it should be sucked into the leak; so, after the place was full of water, I went on deck to direct its preparation. I found that the commodore had ordered one watch of the men to go to the pumps, and the other to work the ship, make sail, &c.; and after measuring the distances on the chart from the nearest ports, and observing that the ship was settling by the head, had determined to run for a beach on this island, near Macao, and to put the ship on shore here, to prevent her from sinking, as the leak was gaining fast upon the pumps. The course was therefore altered, and sail was increased with the greatest coolness and regularity."

It is in such circumstances as these that the British

seaman puts forth all that is best and manliest in him. In the hour of danger or difficulty, he may almost always be depended upon; and when he *knows* his duty he does not fail to *do* it.

At two o'clock, or about an hour and a half after the mishap, one of the chain-pumps broke, and the crew were set to work with buckets; but, of necessity, the leak began to gain rapidly. The sail was now ready for shipping under the bows, but the commodore decided on not using it, lest it might not get correctly into its place, and lest it should check the ship's way, so as to prevent her from reaching the spot where she was to be beached. They continued, therefore, to trim and make sail, while steering through a maze of shoals and islets. Earlier in the day they had sighted a frigate and steamer at anchor in Macao roads, and they now began to fire minute guns, and on again coming in view of them, hoisted the ensign, union jack downwards. They were both French. Goodenough had superintended the removal aft of the upperdeck guns, and was beginning with those of the maindeck, when the commodore gave orders to salute the French admiral. This was done. About half-past three, before all the guns could be secured, the Raleigh took the mud, and was driven into it as far as her available canvas would take her. The pumps were then abandoned, and some of the men sent to save the bread; others to take in the sails. By this time the ship had made ten feet of water, against all the efforts of the pumps to keep her free. She drew, therefore, twenty-six feet of water; and as she had run into the mud where the depth was only eighteen feet, she was regarded as tolerably safe.

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Lieutenant Goodenough was now despatched to Hong-Kong, on board the French steamer *Catinat*, to inform the English admiral in command of what had happened, and to obtain assistance. The admiral gave immediate orders for a steamer to be got ready, and then sent her up the river with instructions to the *Nankin* and *Inflexible* to hasten to the *Raleigh*'s succour. An old vessel was also despatched to take on board the man-of-war's guns. It was four in the morning before Goodenough returned. He was at once conscious that a great change had taken place. The stranded ship had sunk into the mud up to her maindeck guns, and on her deck no sign of life could be discovered. However, on getting on board, Goodenough found the commodore, his secretary, the chaplain, a guard of marines, and a boat's crew. The remainder of the officers and crew were ashore "under canvas." Goodenough was informed, that soon after he left she had begun to settle in the mud; that at seven o'clock the water washed the lower decks, which it completely covered by eleven. Such was the state of affairs until the morning, when the commodore sent to the French vessel for assistance in landing the crew, and to borrow two days' provisions. At the same time the crew began to unbend the sails, to send small spars on shore for use in rigging tents, and to land boat guns, small arms, ammunition, and officers' and crew's baggage and beds. The French flag-captain visited them, and with the assistance of the master and another, selected a good site for the tents, which the French joined our crew in erecting. "The French boat brought us a present," says Goodenough, "of wine, eggs, bread, and cooked fowls. We could not have done without their

kindness and assistance. I found the commodore sitting on a ruined platform above the deck ; and after we had talked about our doings, boiled some of our eggs, and smoked a cigar, we lay down to sleep on the bridge. Early in the morning I went on shore, and found a long tent with the commodore's things at one end, and then the officers' and the men's at the other end. As there was work to be done on board, the commodore gave the crew some biscuit, took them away, and left me with a party to put things in order. He had not been gone ten minutes when a deluge of rain came down, filled a pond which received the drain of a ravine, and made it overflow its banks till the water burst through the whole length of the tent, and nearly carried it all away. My party rushed out and dammed the course of the torrent, tried to open a new course for it through the sand, and saved the brass guns from being either carried off or buried in the sand. The rain lasted all day, but not so violently as at first ; and we made a new tent, which pleased me so much that I at once put half the men into it when they came on shore again."

In due course the officers and men of the *Raleigh* removed to Hong-Kong, and were distributed on board the ships of the English fleet. Great Britain was then at war with China ; and to Goodenough, in May, was given the command of a small armed steamer, the *Honkong*, armed with two large and four small guns, in which he took part in the battle of Falshan.

He assumed the command of his craft on Saturday, the 30th ; and on Monday morning, at daybreak, proceeded to attack some Chinese war-junks anchored in the

Falshan Creek, a branch of the Canton River. The junks proved to be protected by a hill fort; but this was speedily captured by Captain Elliot and his marines, after a brief struggle. The Honkong and four other gunboats then advanced upon the junks, silencing a four-gun battery on their way, and towing after them the boats of the fleet, fully manned. The commodore, who had hoisted his pendant on board the Honkong, jumped into his boat, when within gun-shot range, and led the attack. The Honkong meanwhile had run ashore, and Goodenough had the mortification of seeing the other gunboats pass him. With his usual energy, however, he set to work to get off his little steamer; and afterwards made all haste to follow his companions, who, after leaving a detachment to destroy the captured junks, passed on to chase the fugitive Chinese. All the other gunboats had also taken the ground, and Goodenough speedily slipped past them one by one; but, after making a couple of miles, got on shore again, and had only just hauled his vessel off into the shallow stream, when he heard firing ahead. He called out sharply to his men to cut the hawser; and a young middy, seizing a cutlass, quickly severed it; on they went again, to find the boats retiring before a strong force of twenty picked junks moored across a narrow part of the channel.

The flotilla, it appeared, had pulled on steadily after the capture of the first division of junks, being wholly ignorant of the existence of these twenty, in front of which the three or four leading boats suddenly found themselves at a level of the river. As soon as our crews checked their speed, the Chinese opened a furious fire. The heavy boats were not long in coming up, each carrying

a cannon ; but they either touched a bank, or the current drove them against those already on it, and a sad loss of life ensued. Major Kearney, deputy-quartermaster-general of the army, who had volunteered on this particular service, was among the first who fell—a round eighteen-pounder struck him full in the breast. Another round shot hit the commodore's galley, crushing through her planks, and she began to fill. He stepped on the thwart to keep dry until another boat came up, and a heavy shot passing under his feet went through the bottom of the boat. A fine young sailor from the Isle of Wight lost his arm. Another man had both his legs taken off, and two others were wounded as the boat went from under them.

The commodore called out lustily to save his pendant, and stepped into Captain Turnour's cutter, shaking his fist at the junks, and vowing he would "pay them out" in the afternoon.

An officer, who lay close to Goodenough in his pinnace, had his jacket riddled by grape, and his legs blackened by the wind of a round shot. Two men's heads were taken off by his side, and the blood from their poor trunks literally covered him ; three or four others were wounded in his boat ; and so sharp and well-directed was the firing, that the commodore found it necessary to retire and re-form.

It was at this juncture that the Honkong came up, and opened fire from her bow gun. She took on board some of the wounded from the boats, which she covered while they closed up their array. The commodore, conscious of the inequality of force, would not allow the little steamer to push on further, and she therefore en-

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gaged the junks at a distance, not without suffering some slight injury. After half-an-hour's firing the junks began to retreat, and the Honkong followed. Then up came the boats, and gave the commodore a hearty cheer, and he too dashed ahead. The shallowness of the river increased ; and when the Honkong had steamed a little beyond the spot where the junks had lain, she was brought up by want of water. She drew seven feet, and the greatest depth anywhere was six. Some more junks in a small branch creek opened fire at them, catching sight of her mastheads above the tree-tops ; but in about ten minutes she drove them out and made another effort to get afloat. Meantime, her men could see the commodore vigorously taking and summarily destroying the Chinese junks as he still ascended the river ; some in the very suburb of Falshan, which stands in the same relation to Canton that Manchester does to Liverpool, and had hitherto been a sealed book to Europeans. The commodore's boat, which had floated up with the current, was recovered ; and as soon as possible the Honkong ran down the river again to the point where the first junks had been destroyed.

“ I had received many more wounded,” says Good-enough, “ nearly all very badly so, and so I was ordered to take them straight to Hong-Kong at once, and I passed a horrid night on the bridge. Put the sick on board the hospital ships at seven in the morning ; loaded, watered, and started again at six in the evening, and passed another night on the bridge, piloting the ship, and reported myself to the admiral at nine o'clock next morning. I never was so dead beat in all my life. All the way down I heard the ringing of shot in my ears,

and the groans of a poor fellow with half his skull fractured and carried away, who could not be removed ; and coming up we had two alarms of springing a leak, and I had actually steered for a sandy place to put the ship on shore ; the first from the injection pipe of the engine bursting, and the second from the speed and immersion causing a shot to work out of a hole which it had before stopped for itself."

Such were Commodore Goodenough's experiences of wreck and battle.



## XIX.

### *THE MEGÆRA.*

A.D. 1871.



E have seen the British sailor in the press of battle and the joy of victory. Let us glance at him now in those circumstances of wreck and disaster which put our humanity to so sore a test; and determine for ourselves whether his conduct is then worthy of his fame. We shall choose a recent illustration.

Early in 1871, H.M.S. *Megæra* was commissioned by the Admiralty to convey a detachment of troops to Australia. As the public press gave expression to some doubts as to her seaworthiness, she was examined at Queenstown by the admiral then in command, and by the proper officials; and after a part of her cargo had been landed, and a fresh disposition made of her stores and baggage, she was reported fit to proceed on her voyage. She reached the Cape of Good Hope in safety; and after remaining in port a few days, sailed from Simon's Bay for Sydney, on Sunday morning, May 28th. Her living freight at this time included 42 officers, 44 marines, 180 seamen, and 67 boys; or 333 in all.

The weather was tolerably fair, and the wind being favourable, the occupants of the *Megæra* calculated con-

fidently that they would sight the pleasant hills of Sydney on the 8th of July. For a vessel reputed cranky, her progress was amazingly good: 195 miles on the 7th of June, and 214 on the 8th. During the night of the 8th, however, the barometer sank and the wind rose. A heavy sea was running; and the waters breaking with incessant thud against the thin iron plates of the *Megæra*'s hull, she sprung a leak—if, indeed, that might be called a leak which was virtually a terrible inpouring of the sea through some unknown channel, raising the level of the water in the ship's hold at the rate of an inch an hour. In the morning watch examination revealed the unpleasant fact, that in the engine-room the water was seventeen inches deep—a depth which, as the *Megæra* was unusually broad at bottom, indicated an immense quantity. The pumps were immediately manned, the bilge pumps set in motion, and before long the water was reduced to thirteen inches.

Captain Thrupp, the commander of the *Megæra*, was naturally anxious to discover the exact situation of the leak; but this was no easy matter. For not only did the water cover the ship's framework to some height, but her bottom, inside the iron plating which lined it, was strengthened with brickworks and cement. The exertions of the engineers proved unsuccessful. The mischief continued, but its locality could not be got at; and it was only by constant labour at the pumps that the ship was kept afloat.

One of the officers has recorded that, from the 9th to the 13th of June, passengers and crew experienced the most wearisome apprehension and uncertainty. The leak still remained a thing of mystery; and the men were exhausted with their efforts to keep the water under.

Additional pumps were manned as the leak began to increase ; and a party was told off to bale out with iron buckets, which, at the rate of sixty an hour, were hoisted up to the sound of pipe and fiddle. In spite of every effort—of all these efforts—the water continued to rise. It could be heard splashing from side to side, as the vessel rolled. Sounding like a continual menace, it sickened every heart.

On the 13th, the efforts to get a part of the hold dry were redoubled, and a hundred men were put on to bale at daylight. A new expedient was suggested and adopted : some of the communications by which the water extended from one compartment to another were carefully stopped up. In this way the stokehold was cut off from the next room, and the engine-room from its neighbour, with the effect of considerably narrowing the area within which the leak was to be looked for ; and there was soon good ground for believing that it must have occurred within a certain twelve feet length measured along the bottom. “One of the engineers wrought all day in the water seeking it. He crawled about under the engines and boilers. When the side of the ship on which he happened to be was the lower one, the water was quite over his head ; and after keeping below it as long as he could endure, he would come up to breathe, like a great sea-fish.”

After five days of suspense and unremitting effort, it became evident that to deal with the evil it would be necessary to cut a hole through the ship’s iron framework large enough to admit a man’s hand. This was the work of twenty-four hours. They were then able to reach the orifice. “When we first saw the place from a distance,”

says one of the *Megæra*'s officers, "the jet of water looked so steady and round that we flattered ourselves with the fancy that a rivet had dropped out which might easily be replaced. But it was no lost rivet. It was a hole fairly worn through one of the iron plates ; and the whole plate had been worn so thin, that throughout its surface it yielded and bent under the pressure of the hand like a sheet of tin. Thus our fears were realised as to other and greater dangers threatening than the immediate danger with which we were grappling."

Captain Thrupp made haste to repair this serious injury, and to guard against fatal consequences. Over the old worn-out plate was fastened, by means of a clamp screwed into the sound part of the ironwork, a fresh plate of iron, covered with gutta percha. But as the new iron plate could not be riveted to the old, owing to the rotten condition of the latter, the sea-water still entered the ship,—not indeed, as before, in a spout or jet, but, silently and stealthily, through the interstices.

The *Megæra*'s cruise, since the discovery of the leak, had been directed towards St Paul's Island, in the Indian Ocean, the nearest spot of land. She was about 1500 miles distant on the 9th ; and as the danger that impended over them was known to all on board, that of going down in the deep mid-sea without hope of rescue or escape, we cannot but admire the calm courage with which they met the emergency. Discipline was not for one moment broken ; and not a reproach was hurled at the reckless incapacity which had sent the ship to sea in such a state. On the 15th, the *Megæra* was only 292 miles from the island ; on the 16th, only 86 ; and when the morning haze lighted on the 17th, she was

within nine miles of safety. These were quickly steamed over, and in less than an hour the *Megæra* dropped her anchors in smooth water, and her gallant captain felt that he had saved the three hundred lives entrusted to his care.

A diver having been employed to examine the condition of the ship's bottom, it was found that the plates contiguous to the broken one were in no less dangerous a condition ; besides, some of the timber-frames were eaten away ; the pumps were choked at frequent intervals with pieces of iron, varying from one inch to an inch and a half in length. In fact, the ship's state was such that to continue the voyage would have been to run into unjustifiable peril. It could have ended only in that last of all havens—death. On the 18th, therefore, Captain Thrupp announced his intention of landing crew, passengers, and stores, and forming an encampment on the island until assistance could be obtained.

The island of St Paul lies in lat.  $38^{\circ} 43' S.$ , and long.  $77^{\circ} 38' E.$  It measures two miles in length, a mile and a half in breadth, and forms the rim of a large basin, which appears to be the crater of an extinct volcano. The depth of the crater is estimated at about 180 feet; while its walls at some points rise 800 and 860 feet above the sea. On this volcanic rock Captain Thrupp resolved to station himself, and proceeded to land his crew and passengers ; after which he hastened to get the stores and provisions on shore. Of the latter, there was a few months' supply, and all hands assisted in the work with so much activity that before dusk the discharge was completed. The ship, too, was taken in nearer to an anchorage sometimes frequented by whalers ; and all night the men were busily filling coal-bags ready for transport

to the temporary settlement. One object the captain had in view in thus rapidly unloading, was to lighten the *Megæra* sufficiently to float her over the bar which impedes access to the island ; but in this he did not succeed. The wind blew so hard that, on the preceding morning, the ship was found to be drifting towards the rocks, and was saved only by putting on the engines full speed astern. Thus the gale blew her out to sea ; and the courage and patience of British sailors were tried to the utmost, by a succession of rude experiences and harsh misadventures.

By degrees the *Megæra* was again brought in shore ; but the leak had increased to such an extent, and the wind blew with so much violence, that there was no hope of keeping her afloat another night. She would either founder or drive upon the rocks ; no other alternative was possible. In this emergency Captain Thrupp at once determined on running her aground. The hold and lower decks were cleared ; Captain Thrupp took the command, and his coxswain was placed at the helm. On went the *Megæra* at full speed towards the bar, and stranded upon it in a perpendicular position. As she took the ground, her engines were stopped, but they worked again full speed to keep her from heeling over, until the water rising in the engine-room put out the fires. An anchor was let go to prevent her from slipping off the bar ; and there she lay a wreck.

The anxiety of all on board was keen ; yet the crew maintained their usual composure, and obeyed every order with prompt alacrity. And when once the vessel lay motionless and shattered on the bar, they resigned themselves to the position with truly British contentment, and went to dinner.

Until the 29th of June, the men were employed in unloading the wreck, searching for a supply of water, and running up temporary habitations on the island. A part of the ship could still be safely occupied, and the work of removing the stores went on daily with commendable regularity, four boats being employed on this duty. Though the crew had to be trusted with the care of open boxes, containing not a few articles of value, it is to be recorded to their honour that nothing was missed. Most of the cargo was saved ; so were all the sails. The coal was flooded with water, and the men experienced unusual difficulty and discomfort in getting at it. The condensing-apparatus lay so far under water that it could not be reached ; but three maindeck tanks were taken ashore, and one of these was fitted up to act as a boiler, and supply the place of the proper machinery. Of the ammunition it was found impossible to save more than forty-seven pounds of powder, and two thousand rounds of ball-cartridges.

A large detachment of the crew was employed meanwhile in providing accommodation on the island. Some old cabins and sheds already in existence were repaired and enlarged, tents were erected at convenient points, and huts built of turf or masonry, with roofs of canvas. All these were arranged according to a plan laid down by the captain. Four huts were allotted to the sailors ; the marines had one ; one was set aside for the petty officers, another for the stokers, a third for the stewards, a fourth for the servants, and a fifth for the hospital. A "cooking-galley," or kitchen, was not forgotten. The captain's residence, grandiloquently designated "Government House," was converted from an old shed, in which

the whalers had been accustomed to boil the oil. On an elevated point was erected a signal station, with a small outpost, still higher up, for the look-out men; while perpendicular to "the northern end of the esplanade" a small landing pier was constructed.

At length the last hour of the *Megæra* came. On the night of the 9th of August, her starboard-quarter-galley was washed away by the heavy sea; but she still maintained her erect position on the bar, with all her masts standing; and she held her ground until the morning of the 3d of September. Then the castaways on the island were roused by a loud report in the direction of the wrecked vessel; and on the surf and rollers clearing away, they discovered that she had parted amidships. As they looked, the mainmast went with a crash; and that section of the ship which contained the engines and boilers broke up. The splitting and cracking and tearing of her parting timbers and plate could be heard above the roar of the surf and the tumult of the gale. Soon the foremast with the foreyard fell. The bows then tumbled over, and the shattered and wave-beaten stern was afterwards cast upon the rocks. Such was the end of *H.M.S. Megæra*, ninety-six days after she had been stranded on the shore of the Island of St Paul.

Discipline was firmly maintained in the little island settlement, which had its guards, its sentinels, its police, its sanitary inspectors. The island was carefully explored; and a signal station established on the loftiest height, 860 feet above the *Megæra* encampment. Meantime, the great question ever present to the minds of Captain Thrupp and his officers was: How could the provisions be made to last until assistance arrived? The

supply consisted of 13,000 lbs. of biscuit, with about six weeks' full allowance of salt meat, flour, preserved meats, tea, rum, and chocolate. Only a small quantity of sugar had been saved. No relief could be expected in less than three months from the time when some passing vessel might enable them to communicate with Australia. Consequently, it was absolutely necessary to economise. Officers and men were therefore put upon a one-third ration of bread, two-thirds ration of salt meat, one-half of sugar, and one-fourth of tea. Fish-dinners, however, and occasional captures of wild goats, supplemented and relieved this dreary bill of fare.

A Dutch bark chanced to call at the island on the 16th of July, and Lieutenant Lewis Jones was despatched on board of her to Batavia. On the 26th of August, he returned in the same steamer Oberon, with supplies of provisions, which enabled Captain Thrupp to put his little colony on full allowance. He also brought the welcome intelligence that the steamer Malacca had sailed from Hong-Kong on the 7th, with instructions to carry them to Sydney. Two days later, however, H.M.S. Rinaldo arrived, with orders for the lost ship's company to proceed to England, and undergo the usual court martial. Next morning the Malacca arrived. On the 5th of September, the work of embarkation was completed, and the island deserted. Not a single life had been lost; and from first to last the crew had behaved with the utmost alacrity and the readiest obedience. As for Captain Thrupp, he had well maintained the high character and reputation of the British officer.

Many similar instances of the excellent discipline and

good conduct of our seamen in cases of shipwreck might easily be adduced. Too frequently, in such circumstances, the foreign sailor becomes demoralised, thinks only of himself, and disregards the orders of his officers. Yet it is only a commonplace to say, that at no time is subordination more essential to the common safety, or the strictest obedience a more evident duty, than when the "good ship" is contending with the terrors of the storm or the perils of a "lee shore," and the highest skill and courage may fail to deliver her from them.



## XX.

### *EXPLANATION OF SOME NAVAL TERMS.*

I HAVE endeavoured "to tell my tale," or tales, in the preceding pages, with as much simplicity as possible, and not to use more unfamiliar words than I could help. But sailors have a language of their own, as all professions have to some extent; and in speaking of what they have done, I cannot altogether avoid the words and phrases in which they themselves would describe their doings. Such of these words and phrases as occur in my simple stories, I propose to explain. But I take it for granted that the boy who reads this book knows "a thing or two" before he begins; knows a line-of-battle ship from a frigate, and a three-decker from a two-decker; knows what a yard is and a mast is; and that when a ship carries three masts, the one nearest the bow is the foremast, the one in the middle the mainmast, and the one behind the mizzenmast. I take it for granted also, that he knows the bow of a ship from her stern. No boy can spend a month at the sea-side without learning as much as this, and indeed a little more. Some of my readers will know a great deal more; but for these future Nelsons and Collingwoods the following pages are not intended.

When a sailor speaks of a sail being *aback*, he means that the wind is pressing on its forward surface, and backing it against the mast. *Abaft* is the hinder part of the ship, or at all events some part further from the bow than any given part. Thus we say *abaaft* the mainmast. *Abeam* or *abreast* is the point at right angles with the vessel's mainmast. *About* is a ship's position after she has tacked, or changed her course. We say, "she was put *about*;" *i.e.*, her course

was changed. I suppose everybody knows that a ship is *adrift* when she has broken loose from her moorings, or is no longer under the control of the helm, but goes wherever wind or tide takes her ; and that *aft* has much the same meaning as *ab aft*, behind, or near the stern of a ship. *Amidships* may be the middle of a vessel as regards her length, or as regards her breadth. If you say, “put the helm amidships,” you mean in the middle, between the two sides ; but if you tell me that, “the enemy boarded in the midships,” I understand that they boarded between the stem and the stern. A vessel carries two or three *anchors*, each of which has its distinguishing name ; the best bower and the small bower are those stowed near the bows ; the best being on the starboard, and the small on the larboard bow. The sheet anchor is of the same size and weight as either of the bowers ; the stream anchor is a smaller one, used in smooth shallow water ; the kedge is the smallest of all. *Athwart hawse* is a ship’s position when it has been driven across the stern of another.

An expression often employed in the foregoing pages, is to *bear up*, or *bear away* ; and it indicates that change in a ship’s course which is necessary to make her rise before the wind, when she has been sailing “close hauled,” or with a side wind. I suppose the term was derived from the motion of the helm which, when this manœuvre is intended, is “borne up” to leeward, or nearer “the wind’s eye,” i.e., is luffed. To *bear away* is to throw the vessel’s head off the wind. The *bearing* of a place is its situation with respect to the ship. To *beat* up is to sail against the direction of the wind. I *belay* a rope when I make it fast ; but if I fasten a sail to its yard, I *bend* it. *Bits*, on board ship, may either be the small wooden pins to which ropes are attached, or those large timber uprights, with a cross-piece, over which the bight (or coil) of the cable is put. *Bowlines* are ropes made fast to the “leeches,” or sides of the sails, to pull them forward. To *bring to* is to check the course of a ship by so arranging

the sails as to make them neutralise each other, and keep her stationary. She is then said to *lie by*, or *lie to*, having certain of her sails "aback," to counteract the pressure of those which are full. To *come to* is a phrase sometimes used with the same meaning, but more generally it signifies "to let go the anchor." A ship *broaches to*, when a heavy sea, or a violent wind, drives her to windward of her course, in defiance of the helm. The *chains* or *channels* of a ship are those strong projections from the sides to which the shrouds or rigging of the lower masts are secured, by means of wooden blocks, or "dead eyes," firmly chained and bolted to the ship's side. We often meet with the term *close hauled*; this applies when a vessel has her "sheets" aboard; that is, when the sails are hauled in as taut or tight as possible, or what the sailors call "chock-a-block." *Fore and aft* means from stem to stern. To *forge ahead* is to drive before the wind. To *furl* a sail is to roll it close to the yard, stay, or mast to which it belongs, and to secure it with a cord or "gasket."

When we wish to direct a ship's course as near as possible to the point of the compass from which it rises, we *haul the wind*. The term *hawser* applies to the situation of the cables before the ship's stern, when she is moored with an anchor at the starboard and another at the larboard bow. It also signifies any short distance ahead of a ship, or between her head and the anchor by which she rides. A *hawser* is a small cable. To *heave to* is the same as to *bring to*. *Larboard*: this is the *left side* of the ship to a person at the stern; just as *starboard* is the right side. When we wish the helmsman to put the helm down, *i.e.*, towards the lee side of the ship—the side away from the wind—in order that she may sail nearer to the wind, we order him to *luff*. A landsman hearing a sailor use the word *sheet* would reasonably suppose that he referred to a sail, and this mistake is actually made by the poet Allan Cunningham in his well-known song—

"A wet sheet and a flowing sea."

But on board ship a *sheet* is a rope, and the *mainsheet* is the large rope attached to the mainsailboom, by which, when "set," it is hauled into its place.

When we discover a ship at some distance from the shore, that is in "the roads," we speak of her as being in the *offing*. To *port the helm* is to put it over to the larboard or left side of the ship.

A common expression in the description of naval battles is, that a ship poured her fire into her enemy's *quarter*. Well, the *quarter* of a vessel is that part which lies towards the stern, or between the aftmost end of the main "chains" and the side of the stern, where it is terminated by the "quarter pieces." More briefly, it is that part of the vessel's side "abaft the beam." A ship is *raked* when her enemy's broadside guns sweep her deck "fore and aft," or from stem to stern. To *reef* a sail is to fasten up a portion of it by means of small ropes called "pivots," fixed on the sail for this purpose. Sails are generally fitted with three rows of reefing pivots, and a vessel is "close reefed" when tied up to the third row. To *anchor with a spring*, as Nelson's ships did at the Nile, is to pass a smaller cable or hawser out of the stern or quarter-post before the anchor is let go, and to "bind" or fasten this cable to the ring of the anchor, in order that the ship's broadside may be brought to bear in any given direction. A ship *tacks* when she changes her course from one "board" or side to another; from the starboard to the larboard, or the larboard to the starboard. A ship's *wake* is her track. She is said to be *under way*, or to have *way* upon her, when she has "weighed" anchor, and is under the impulse of wind or tide or stream. To *weather* a ship is to sail to windward of it. The *weather-gage* is the situation of a ship to windward of weather; which in the days when our men-of-war depended upon canvas alone, was obviously of great advantage. We *wear* ship when we change her course from one "board" to another by turning her *stern* to windward. This is the opposite to "tacking."

## XXI.

### *BRITISH NAVAL VICTORIES.*

The French defeated off Sluys by Edward III., June 24, 1340.  
The Spanish defeated off Winchelsea by Edward III.,  
August 29, 1350.  
Defeat of the French near Milford Haven, 1405.  
Destruction of the Spanish Armada, July 19, 1588.  
Blake defeats the Dutch in the Straits of Dover, September 28, 1652.  
Blake defeats Van Tromp near Spithead, February 18-20, 1653.  
Blake again defeats the Dutch off the North Foreland, June 2, 1653.  
The Dutch defeated off the coast of Holland, August, 1653.  
Destruction of the Spanish fleet by Blake at Santa Cruz, April 20, 1659.  
The Duke of York defeats the Bordeaux fleet, December 4, 1664.  
The Duke of York, Penn, and others, defeat the Dutch off Harwich, June 3, 1665.  
Great victory over the Dutch at the mouth of the Thames, July 25 and 26, 1666.  
Defeat of the Dutch in Solebay or Southwold Bay, May 28, 1672.  
Prince Rupert defeats the French and Dutch on the coast of Holland, May 28, June 4, and August 4, 1673.  
Admiral Russel's victory off Cape La Hogue, over the French, May 19, 1692.  
Admiral Benbow beats off the French fleet near Carthagena, June 16, 1693.

Sir George Rooke defeats the French off Vigo, October 12, 1702.

Gains a victory over the French off Malaga, August 13, 1704.

Sir George Byng defeats the Spanish fleet, in the Faro of Messina, July 31, 1718.

Anson defeats the French off Finisterre, May 3, 1747.

Hawke defeats the French off Finisterre, October 14, 1747.

Pocock defeats the French in the East Indies, 1758 and 1759.

Boscawen's victory over the French off Cape Lagos, August 18, 1759.

Hawke's victory over the French in Quiberon Bay, November 20, 1759.

Rodney's victory over the Spaniards near Cape St Vincent, January 16, 1780.

Parker's victory over the Dutch off the Dogger Bank, August 5, 1781.

Rodney's victory over the French in the West Indies, April 12, 1782.

Defeat of the French and Spanish in Gibraltar Bay, September 13, 1782.

Defeats of the French in the East Indies, February 19, 1782 ; April 12, 1782 ; July 6, 1782 ; September 3, 1782 ; and June 20, 1782.

Lord Howe's great victory off Ushant, June 1, 1794.

Hotham's defeat of the French, March 14, 1795.

Lord Bridport's defeat of the French, June 23, 1795.

Sir J. Jervis's victory off Cape St Vincent, February 14, 1797.

Duncan defeats the Dutch at Camperdown, October 11, 1797.

Nelson's victory of the Nile, August 1, 1798.

Sir J. Warren defeats the French off the Irish coast, October 12, 1798.

Bombardment of Copenhagen and destruction of Danish fleet by Sir Hyde Parker and Nelson, April 2, 1801.

Sir J. Saumarez defeats the French off Cadiz, July 12, 1801.

Sir R. Calder defeats the French and Spanish off Ferrol, July 22, 1805.

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Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, October 21, 1805.  
 Sir R. Strachan defeats the French off Cape Ortegal,  
 November 4, 1805.  
 Sir T. Duckworth defeats the French in the West Indies,  
 February 6, 1806.  
 Capture of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen by Admiral  
 Gambier and Lord Cathcart, September 8, 1807.  
 Capture of the Russian fleet in the Tagus, September 3, 1808.  
 Defeat of the Turkish fleet at Navarino by Sir Edward Cod-  
 rington, October 21, 1827.  
 Bombardment of Algiers by Lord Exmouth's fleet, August  
 27, 1826.  
 Bombardment and capture of Acre by British fleet, Novem-  
 ber 3, 1840.

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\*.\* In the Revolutionary War, terminated by the Treaty of Amiens, in 1802, the British navy took or destroyed the following vessels of war :—

French,	.	.	.	.	.	.	341
Dutch,	.	.	.	.	.	.	89
Spanish,	.	.	.	.	.	.	86
Russian, Danish, &c.,	.	.	.	.	.	.	25
 Total,	.	.	.	.	.	.	541

In the war against Napoleon, from 1802 to 1814, the British navy took or destroyed the following :—

French,	.	.	.	.	.	.	342
Spanish,	.	.	.	.	.	.	127
Danish,	.	.	.	.	.	.	64
Russian, Dutch, &c.,	.	.	.	.	.	.	36
 Total,	.	.	.	.	.	.	569

**THE IRONCLAD NAVY OF ENGLAND.**

(COMPILED FROM THE NAVY LIST.)

Name.	Guns.	Tonnage.	H. P.	Name.	Guns.	Tonnage.	H. P.
Achilles, . . . . .	16	9694	5722	Monarch, . . . . .	7	8322	7842
Agincourt, . . . . .	17	10627	6867	Nelson, . . . . .	12	7323	6000
Alexandra, . . . . .	12	9492	8615	Neptune, . . . . .	6	9000	9000
Audacious, . . . . .	14	6034	4021	Northampton, . . . . .	12	7323	6000
Belleisle, . . . . .	4	4720	3958	Northumberland, . . . . .	27	10584	6558
Bellerophon, . . . . .	15	7551	6521	Orion, . . . . .	4	4720	3900
Black Prince, . . . . .	28	9137	5772	Pallas, . . . . .	8	3787	3581
Cyclops, . . . . .	4	3430	1660	Penelope, . . . . .	11	4394	4703
Defence, . . . . .	16	6070	2537	Prince Albert, . . . . .	4	3905	2128
Devastation, . . . . .	4	9387	6652	Repulse, . . . . .	12	6190	3347
Dreadnought, . . . . .	4	10886	8000	Resistance, . . . . .	16	6070	2428
Erebus, <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	16	1844	....	Rupert, . . . . .	4	5444	4635
Glatton, . . . . .	2	4912	2868	Scorpion, . . . . .	4	2751	1455
Gorgon, . . . . .	4	3430	1669	Shannon, . . . . .	9	5439	3370
Hecate, . . . . .	4	3430	1755	Sultan, . . . . .	12	9286	8629
Hector, . . . . .	18	6713	3256	Superb, . . . . .	16	8760	7430
Hercules, . . . . .	14	8677	7200	Swiftsure, . . . . .	14	6660	4913
Hotspur, . . . . .	3	4010	3497	Temeraire, . . . . .	8	8412	7700
Hydra, . . . . .	4	3430	1472	Terror, <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	6	1844	....
Inflexible, . . . . .	4	11406	8000	Thunderer, . . . . .	4	9387	6270
Invincible, . . . . .	14	6034	4832	Triumph, . . . . .	14	6660	4892
Iron Duke, . . . . .	14	6034	4268	Valiant, . . . . .	18	6713	3560
Lord Warden, . . . . .	18	7842	6706	Warrior, . . . . .	32	9137	5469
Minotaur, . . . . .	17	10627	6702	Wivern, . . . . .	4	2751	1446

<sup>1</sup> Floating Battery.





